



Hats



Off

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Building Namibia's Future Issue

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NAMIBIA RECOGNISED AS ATTRACTIVE INVESTMENT DESTINATION

Recognised for its highly stable political and economic environment, Namibia is one of Africa's gems. Considered among the safest democratic nations in Africa, the country offers impressive infrastructure and excellent quality of life.

This was shared in the African Wealth report for March 2023. The report is the definitive guide to Africa's wealth and luxury sector, it provides a comprehensive review of private wealth in Africa, including high-net-worth individuals, luxury and wealth management trends, as well as expert insights on investing in Africa, the investment migration sector, and economic mobility on the continent.

The Namibian government is actively seeking foreign investment to boost the country's economic growth and diversify the economy. Thus, the country decided to develop new engines of growth such as the green hydrogen project, which is expected to pump billions of dollars into the domestic economy.

"It provides many opportunities for international investors seeking a foothold and growth on the African continent, including tax incentives, financing, and a one-stop bureau service for international companies. Namibia offers an attractive territorial tax system, which means that residents will not generally be taxed on income generated outside the country", reads the report.

It added tax rates are relatively low in Namibia when compared to most other African markets. The top rate of income tax in the country is a relatively modest 37%, and perhaps most notably there is no estate duty or capital gains tax in the country.

Additionally, it added Namibia is Africa's new frontier as it is expected to be one of Africa's fastest-growing markets going forward, with high-net-worth growth of over 60% forecast for the next decade (to 2032).

Leading industries expected to drive the local economy are mining (diamonds, uranium, gold, zinc, and copper), eco-tourism (safari lodges and hunting), farming, fishing and manufacturing.

As of December 2022, the report stated total investable wealth held in Namibia account to US\$26 billion.

Source: <https://neweralive.na/posts/namibia-recognised-as-attractive-investment-destination>

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ECONOMIC OUTLOOK UPDATE - MARCH 2023

ECONOMY IS EXPECTED TO GROW BY 3.0 PERCENT IN 2023

The Bank of Namibia released the Economic Outlook update for March 2023 with the domestic economy projected to grow by 3.0 percent in 2023 and by 2.9 percent in 2024.

Global and Regional Outlook

Overall, global economic growth is expected to grow moderately in 2022 before slowing down in 2023. According to the IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO) Update released in January 2023, global growth is estimated at 3.4 percent for 2022 and is expected to slow down to 2.9 percent in 2023. The estimate for 2022 and projection for 2023 are both 0.2 percentage points higher than the forecast from the October 2022 WEO, reflecting greater-than-expected resilience to headwinds across several economies. Although the 2023 annual growth projection suggests that the global economy will avoid a recession, some economies are likely to experience a recessionary period at some point over the course of the year.

Advanced Economies (AEs) are projected to experience the sharpest slowdown in growth during 2023. Real growth in the AEs is anticipated to slow to 2.7 percent in 2022 and to further moderate to 1.2 percent in 2023. This slowdown is set to be experienced across roughly 90 percent of countries in the AEs group, most notably in the Euro Area and the United Kingdom (UK). Despite the depressed outlook for the region, there have been upward revisions to the growth projection across most of the AEs since the October 2022 WEO, except for the UK economy.

Economic activity in Emerging Markets and Developing Economies (EMDEs) is expected to improve marginally in 2022 and 2023. Growth in EMDEs is expected to improve slightly from 3.9 percent in 2022 to 4.2 percent in 2023 due to upward revisions in China, Russia, Brazil, and Mexico.

Any upside to growth across the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) region is expected to be limited by weakness in external demand and energy challenges in South Africa. Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is projected to remain flat at 3.8 percent in 2022 and 2023. The projection for 2023 has been revised upward by 0.1 percentage point since the October 2022 WEO.

Overall, a subdued outlook for external demand is expected to weigh on the region's growth prospects. The region's two largest economies (Nigeria and South Africa) are projected to grow by 3.2 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively, in 2023.

The risks to the global outlook remain on the negative side, primarily due to the RussiaUkraine war, the surging inflation, and tighter financial and monetary conditions.

Domestic Economic Outlook

Namibia's GDP growth is projected to improve in 2022 before moderating downwards in 2023. Real GDP growth is estimated to have increased to 4.2 percent in 2022 but is then projected to slow down to 3.0 percent in 2023. The estimated growth for 2022 has been revised upwards from 3.9 percent published in the December 2022 Economic Outlook update, mainly on account of higher production volumes from the diamond mining sector as well as sustained growth for most industries in secondary and tertiary sectors.

Risks to domestic growth are predominantly in the form of monetary policy tightening globally and high costs of key import items that are likely to remain for the entire forecast period. Major central banks in the world continue to tighten monetary policies, a phenomenon that is anticipated to result in a global slowdown in 2023. Furthermore, the war between Russia and Ukraine is likely to continue for longer than expected, and so are the high prices for affected commodities for which Namibia is a net importer, including fuel, wheat, and cooking oil. Other domestic risks include water supply interruptions that continue to affect mining production at the coast, energy challenges in the region, and uncertainty about the effects of climate change going forward.

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MTC AND DWN ACCELERATE LAND DELIVERY

MTC and Development Workshop Namibia, through a land and housing programme, are accelerating the delivery of low-cost land for housing with the servicing of 282 plots in Stampriet in the Hardap region.

The Oniipa Town Council was first to benefit with at 113 plots handed over to its residents last year.

After Stampriet, plans are in progress to extend the same development to the towns of Okakarara and Otjiwarongo, Omaruru, Ondangwa, Okongo, Rehoboth and Rundu. So far, Okakarara and Otjiwarongo are making steady progress, with over 707 plots earmarked for Okakarara and 483 for Otjiwarongo. All plots are earmarked for ultra-low-income earners market, and consultations between DWN, local authorities and residents are ongoing.

MTC spokesperson Tim Ekandjo stated: "Addressing the land and housing issue in Namibia requires smart collaboration and deliberate intervention; thus, through DWN, we intentionally avail N\$1 million yearly to enable the programme to expand to other towns, such as Lüderitz, Swakopmund, Omaruru, Ondangwa, Okongo, Rehoboth and Rundu".

"The effort is to curtail and redress the increase of shanty settlement while contributing to creating a land ownership economy. Initially, the programme planned to deliver 1 585 plots, but that number has now been increased to 1 941", added Ekandjo.

Launched in 2021, MTC's Land Delivery Programme through DWN is a three-year long programme, aimed to address the issue of landlessness in selected towns by availing and delivering affordable land to low-income earners through DWN.

It is designed to enable one to acquire at least a 300 square metres piece of land at a reasonable price as low as N\$15 000, pay it off over a 12-month period, own the title deed to the land – and with that certificate, gain access to financing for the construction of his/her home.

Source: <https://neweralive.na/posts/mtc-and-dwn-accelerate-land-delivery>

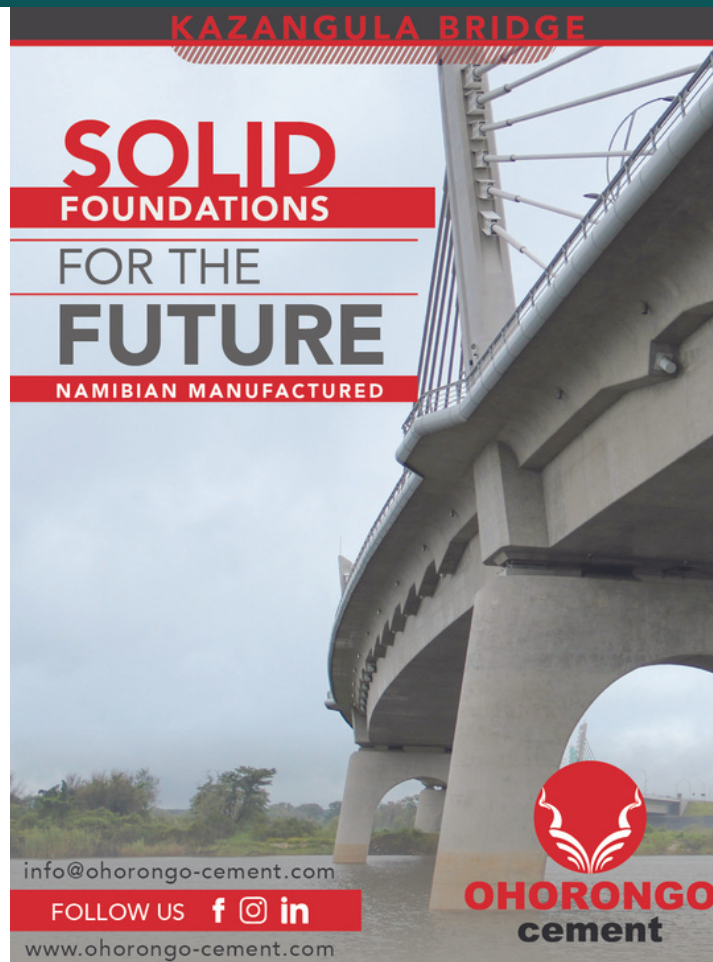
CORPORATES INJECT N\$2 MILLION INTO HOUSING

In an event reaffirming their strong seven-year partnership, the Pupkewitz Foundation, Ohorongo Cement and FNB Namibia, through the FirstRand Foundation Trust, collectively handed over N\$2 million to the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN) recently for the construction of 12 houses in Rupara, 22 in Divundu and 11 in Gobabis.

The Pupkewitz Foundation donated N\$1 million, while Ohorongo Cement and FNB Namibia through the FirstRand Foundation Trust donated N\$ 500 000 each.

Since 2016, the SDFN has constructed over 395 houses with funding from the above-mentioned partners.

When handing over the donation, FNB home loans national sales manager Rozina Jacobs emphasised the importance of projects and initiatives which contribute to the provision of affordable housing to Namibians nationwide.



"This partnership ensures that our people have access to the most basic human right. By providing housing, the partnership has helped to reduce homelessness, improve health and safety, and support economic development. The success of this project ultimately demonstrates that it is possible to make a difference through collaboration and innovation", she observed.

Cement CSI Representative Alina Nelenge said "We believe that with combined resources, we can achieve more, and by partnering with the FirstRand Foundation and the Pupkewitz Foundation, we are doing exactly that. We make a difference where it matters the most, and instead of trying to run independent initiatives, we remain committed to this valuable partnership as we trust that through the partnership contribution, many Namibians will be supplied with decent and affordable housing".

Pupkewitz Foundation representative from Pupkewitz Megatech, Gert Burger, added that access to quality housing has the ability to transform neighbourhoods and also connect residents to critical amenities, build stronger social cohesion in communities, and create pathways to education and economic opportunities.

"Each dollar invested in affordable housing boosts local economies by leveraging public and private resources to generate income, adequate job creation and retention, financial stability, security, and improves the quality of life of residents by leading to better health and population diversity", he added.

Source: <https://neweralive.na/posts/corporates-inject-n2-million-into-housing>

LOCAL BUSINESSES TRADING WITH CHINA TO GET A BOOST FROM TRADE SOLUTION

The Africa-China Trade Solution, a trade agreement with Chinese company Guomoa launched by Standard Bank Namibia will assist local businesses import products from China by providing financial services and directly linking them to credible and vetted suppliers.

Africa -China Trade solution (ACTS) is a flagship proposition by the Standard Bank Group for African businesses trading with China, Emilia Uupindi, Standard Bank Namibia trade manager for business and commercial services said.

"The solution has three pillars, the import solution, solutioning for customers buying from China, the export solution, solutioning for customers selling to China, and the travel component. The webinar on March 15, 2023, was focused on the import leg of the solution", she explained.

According to Uupindi, the solution is in line with Standard Bank's efforts and key purpose of driving Africa's growth.

"We seek to use our links with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) to solve observed trade problems with China, so our clients can have a competitive edge over other players in their chosen business areas and grow their business volumes", she said.

Furthermore, she said Standard Bank understands that the import process from China comes with its own set of risks and challenges for African importers.

"Through this solution, Standard bank can help Namibian importers navigate any possible risk with the assistance of our trusted import partner in China to ensure seamless cross-border trading, end to end", she added.

Uupindi meanwhile said the solutions function is to connect African importers to vetted Chinese suppliers under the group's strategic partnership with ICBC, the world's largest bank.

Source: <https://economist.com.na/78028/retail/local-businesses-trading-with-china-to-get-a-boost-from-trade-solution/>



NAMIBIA CONSUMER PRICE INDEX BULLETIN - FEBRUARY 2023

The inflation rate measures the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the month under review compared to the previous month (month-on-month changes) as well as to the corresponding month in the previous year (year-on-year changes).

The inflation rate is vital for purposes of economic policy-making, especially the conduct of monetary policy and to consumers in general. The Consumer Price Index is published about 15 days after the end of the reference month to which it relates. In February 2023, the annual inflation rate increased by 7.2 percent compared to 4.5 percent recorded in February 2022.

On a monthly basis, the inflation rate increased by 0.4 percent compared to 1.1 percent recorded a month earlier.

The main contributors to the annual inflation rate were food and non-alcoholic beverages (2.6 percentage points); transport (1.5 percentage points), alcoholic beverages & tobacco (1.0 percentage points), housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels (0.7 percentage points); miscellaneous goods and services; and furnishing household equipment and routine maintenance of the house (each contributed 0.4 percentage points).

The zonal inflation rates for the month of February 2023 revealed that, Zone 1 (Kavango East, Kavango West, Kunene, Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshana, Oshikoto, Otjozondjupa, and Zambezi) recorded the highest annual inflation rate of 7.6 percent, followed by Zone 3 (J|Kharas, Erongo, Hardap, Omaheke) recording an annual inflation rate of 7.3 percent while Zone 2 (Komas), recorded the lowest annual inflation rate of 6.7 percent.

On a monthly basis, the Zone 1 registered inflation rate of 0.5 percent, Zone 2 recorded 0.4 percent and Zone 3 recorded an inflation rate of 0.3 percent. The analysis of the average retail prices for some of the basic products consumed by the households for the month of February 2023, indicate that Chicken, frozen assorted pieces (1.5kg), consumers in Zone 2 paid the lowest price at N\$84.77 while the highest price was observed in Zone 1 at N\$111.93.

For a Brown bread, consumers in Zone 3 paid the least at N\$13.32, while consumers in Zone 2 paid the highest at N\$14.19.

HALF-CONSTRUCTED MHDP HOUSES TO BE COMPLETED

The Ministry of Urban and Rural development has appointed a construction company to ensure half-built houses constructed under the Mass Housing Development Programme are completed speedily.

The Minister of Urban and Rural development, Erastus Uutoni, handed over 319 incomplete Mass Housing Development Programme (MHDP) houses in Swakopmund to New Era Construction.

The company has been tasked to complete the houses for occupation. The contract period is for 18 months and brings to an end a long-standing court saga that resulted in the houses standing incomplete for almost five years.

"The Ministry of Urban and Rural development is on the move and will ensure delivery of housing and land", Uutoni said at the event hosted in Matutura. He implored the contractors, New Era Investment, to complete the houses within the 18 months.

With the inception of the MHDP, a total of 1 837 houses were planned and commissioned for construction in Swakopmund. Of this total, 1 332 houses have been completed and handed over to the beneficiaries thus far.

The MHDP was launched and implemented by the government in 2013 and was aimed at increasing investment in the affordable housing sector and significantly increasing the supply towards meeting the demand for housing in Namibia.

<https://www.republikein.com.na/focus-exams/half-constructed-mhdp-houses-to-be-completed2022-11-02>

Whilst the CIF has no legal authority to monitor the performance of just any business in the sector, it can demand that its members adhere to the Code of Conduct of the CIF.

Agreement to honour the Code of Conduct is one of the requirements for membership of the CIF. In a sense it allows a degree of self-regulation of members of the CIF. However, should any member be in contravention of the Code of Conduct, he/she can be asked to rectify the problem or indeed lose the membership of the CIF.

Kirchner says: "As a stakeholder in the construction sector, we want to see that the sector is optimally regulated. This is in the interest of the development of country, the development of our sector and ultimately, will help to better utilise scarce financial resources. However, in the absence of that, we want to call everyone that is buying or funding building and construction services, to establish first whether the service provider is a member of the CIF.

IN THE ABSENCE OF A COUNCIL-CONTRACT CIF MEMBERS

The Construction Industries Federation of Namibia (CIF) is concerned that many government projects over the last years, were abandoned before completion, as well as that the quality of the workmanship on many of the projects were regarded as very poor and below desired standards. Accordingly, the CIF wants to encourage buyers of building and construction services to be extremely careful and prudent when selecting service providers and awarding contracts accordingly. The organisation points out that this is as a result of there not being a statutory regulatory body, such as a construction council – in place; and highlights related disadvantages; as well as recommends that in the interim, buyers only appoint contractors that are CIF members, since they have to adhere to the federation's Code of Conduct.

With the lack of a regulatory body in the construction sector, such as a construction council, there is not a single statutory body that has the mandate to monitor and police the performance of contractors in this sector. With the absence of such a body, buyers of building and construction services –mostly government authorities, are not in the position to accurately evaluate tenders before their respective awards.

Repeatedly, since 2006, the CIF has lobbied Government so that a Construction Council would be established. With no statutory regulatory body in place the following can occur:

- tenders are awarded to contractors that do not have the experience to do the job and therefore are not in the position to complete the projects;

- tenders are often awarded to Namibian so-called tenderpreneurs, who subcontract to other contractors, many of them foreign companies;

- if a contractor has not completed a project or has delivered below par work, and consequently has been barred to do further work for a specific authority, they often open up and operate under a different business name;

- many business owners create more than one – often up to three companies – only for tendering purposes; and

- the occurrence of nepotism and potentially fraud, is much more probable in an unregulated environment.

Without an appropriate regulatory body in the construction sector, the scope for fraudulent and corruptive practices is much bigger, which can lead to a very inefficient public procurement system.

Not having a council is essentially a very wasteful use of government resources, and ultimately taxpayers' monies, as unqualified businesses are getting contracts.

At the same time, the procurement processes are incredibly long and therefore very costly. With a register of prequalified contractors, a lot of bureaucracy can be cut out. This saves everyone's time – both the time of civil servants as well as the precious time of contractors.

However, in the absence of a council, the CIF wants to encourage every buyer of building and construction services to only appoint contractors that are members of the CIF.

NAMDEB ENABLES 34MW WIND FARM WORTH N\$922M

Namdeb is planning to construct a 34-megawatts (MW) wind farm at an estimated investment cost of N\$922 million (US\$51 million).

The farm will be constructed at Kerbehuk, located 45km north of Oranjemund by Envusa Energy, a special-purpose vehicle owned by Anglo-America and EDF-Renewables, with Namdeb as the off taker.

The wind farm plans, which will reduce the miner's carbon emission by 79,000 tonnes annually, are part of the diamond miner's first phase of its carbon-neutral projects, which will also see the development of a larger solar facility solution to supplement the wind farm, with studies ongoing to evaluate options to electrify its current diesel consuming operations.

Mr Lionel Coetzee, portfolio manager - strategic project at Namdeb says "At Namdeb, we are aware of the effects of climate change and remain committed to supporting our government in the national decarbonisation efforts maintaining global temperature rise to below 2°C as called for by the Paris Agreement. At the same time, our commitment is aligned towards achieving the climate change goal to become carbon neutral by 2030 with scope 1 (fossil fuels) and scope 2 (fossil electricity) emissions".

"The plan is for the wind energy facility to be constructed, operated and maintained by a special purpose vehicle (SPV). The shareholders of the SPV are intended to be Envusa Energy and a Namibian partner that is still to be identified. Namdeb would be the sole off-taker of the wind energy produced. As indicated, wind energy would make a large contribution to our aim of carbon neutrality by 2030, and also provide electricity at a lower cost. Most of the carbon emission reduction will be through the replacement of fossil electricity and fossil fuels, and the wind energy facility is the first large-scale implementation project to propel us towards that goal".

Coetzee said the diamond company plans to submit its Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) application to the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism next month, with construction targeted to commence in the second quarter of 2024.

"The current plan is that the development phase will be completed in April 2024 when financial close will be reached. Construction would then commence in Quarter 2 of 2024. It is expected that construction and commissioning would take around 18 months and therefore the plan is that the wind energy facility will commence commercial operations in late 2025", he said.

Coetzee said a detailed engineering design phase is still in progress and no definitive decision regarding the exact type of wind energy technology supplier has been made. Coetzee said more than 200 jobs will be created during the construction phase of the project.

Source:

<https://thebrief.com.na/index.php/component/k2/item/2656-namdeb-enables-34mw-wind-farm-worth-n-922m>



50MW WIND POWER PLANT WORTH N\$1.40 BILLION TO BE DEVELOPED IN LÜDERITZ

A 50MW wind power farm and the associated infrastructure to connect the power plant to the local grid will be developed in Lüderitz, following the inking of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and a Transmission Connection (TCA) agreement between Nampower and CERIM Lüderitz Energy.

The power plant which is on a build-own-operate basis will cost approximately N\$1.40 billion and will be located about 16 km south of Lüderitz, the power utility announced Monday, 17 April 2023.

According to the project agreements, CERIM will be responsible for the complete development of the power plant, which includes the financing, construction, operation, and maintenance while NamPower will be the exclusive offtaker of electricity from the plant for the 25-year PPA term.

NamPower and CERIM Lüderitz Energy envisaged that the development of the plant will be completed within 27 months from the PPA signature date, thus commercial operation is expected by July 2025. The 50MW Lüderitz Wind IPP power project forms part of NamPower's planned generation projects under its Integrated Strategy and Business Plan (ISBP) for the period 2020 – 2025.

The ISBP outlines the company's strategic focus, which includes the prioritisation of local renewable resources over the five years (2020-2025) in line with the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME)'s determination on the development of generation capacities. The project will contribute to the fulfilment of national policy goals such as the Namibia integrated resource plan for the electricity sector, national energy policy, renewable energy policy as well as the fifth national development plan.

According to the statement, the Wind IPP Power Project will contribute to local employment creation as semi-skilled and unskilled labour will be sourced from the Kharas Region. NamPower's Managing Director, Kahenge Haulofu at the signing stated that "considering the power supply situation in the Southern African Power Pool, the commissioning of this project come July 2025 will displace 50MW of imports which is a step in the right direction".

Source: <https://economist.com.na/78602/mining-energy/50mw-wind-power-plant-worth-n1-40-billion-to-be-developed-in-luderitz/>

A SMOOTHER ROAD AHEAD FOR THE INDUSTRY IN 2023

It has been a long and arduous road to recovery for the construction industry from the serious downswing brought about by the pandemic.

According to statistics aggregator Trading Economics, South Africa's construction industry contracted by as much as a quarter over three years, decreasing from nearly R140 billion in the second quarter of 2019 to R105 billion in Q2 of 2022.

"The past few years have been a trial by fire for many South African companies involved in construction and infrastructure development. The industry has been forced to overcome several major issues including an unstable market, wildly fluctuating input costs, and industry-wide material and employee shortages", says industry expert Roelof van den Berg, chief executive officer of the GAP Infrastructure Corporation (GIC).

"However, there are glimmers of light and there is no doubt that 2023 will be filled with opportunities. The sector finally has a chance to shake off lockdown fatigue and hopefully resolve some of the pressing supply chain issues we faced this year", he further stated.

Based on his 14 years of industry knowledge and experience, van den Berg believes that sector growth in 2023 will depend on the following three key factors:

Increased government spend

Government is South Africa's biggest infrastructure spender, and in June 2020, it announced that it would be investing more than R2.3 trillion over the next ten years into infrastructure projects. Many of the infrastructure projects that were put on hold in 2020 and 2021 were reinstated in 2022, with the bulk of postponed projects set to commence in early 2023.

Supply chain issues

During lockdowns, the industry keenly felt the effects of production slowdowns in key construction materials. Since then, the price of basic materials has remained highly volatile. The construction material industry is gradually resolving supply issues and catching up production backlogs that go as far back as 2020.

Skills shortages

While the supply of low-skilled workers has seen a sharp rise in the past few years, a shortage of skilled workers is slowly started taking root. But van den Berg is confident that 2023 will see a marked upsurge in educated workers as an increase in projects and funding leads to better employment opportunities.

Source: https://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/a-smoother-road-ahead-for-the-infrastructure-industry-in-2023-2023-01-09/rep_id:4136

ENERGY PRICES IN UK TO SEND MATERIAL COSTS SOARING IN 2023

Material prices could face double-digit hikes in 2023, the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) has warned. Concerns centre in particular on the second and third quarter, when energy prices are expected to be "considerably above" the levels seen prior to the Ukraine war, especially without government support.

That is set to put "significant upward pressure on prices", especially on energy-intensive products such as bricks, cement, plasterboard and insulation, CLC co-chairs John Newcomb and Peter Caplehorn said.

Some materials, including plaster, plasterboard and insulation, could face double-digit inflation later in the year, they added. But product availability, for now, is "good and returning to pre-COVID levels", with timber prices falling due to the large stock already in the UK and reduced shipping costs. The only timber stock facing disruption is birch plywood, according to the CLC, much of which used to come from Russia and is now sanctioned.

"With limited supplies available from Latvia and Finland, we advise speaking to plywood suppliers regarding alternatives", Caplehorn and Newcomb said. Contractors are also facing a "new area of concern" in solar and environmental products, as it is proving difficult to ensure products coming from Chinese manufacturers have the correct accreditation.

"This is a growing product area with increasing demand, so the UK construction industry is challenged to ensure such products are of the proper standard and quality", Caplehorn and Newcomb said.

Looking ahead, the CLC warned that shipping lead times could face more bottlenecks as China faces a hike in coronavirus infections, though schedules have improved in recent months.

Source: <https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/supply-chain/clc-energy-prices-to-send-material-costs-soaring-in-2023-21-12-2022/>



ZIMBABWE: TREASURY ALLOCATES US\$1B FOR HOUSING PROJECTS

The Zimbabwe cabinet has approved the construction of 200,000 low-cost houses and flats by 2023.

Cabinet also approved the use of new building technology in the construction of the low-cost houses and flats, after being tried out this year in a significant Dzivarasekwa complex of 1,400 flats.

Monica Mutsvangwa, information, publicity and broadcasting services minister, stated that the cabinet was briefed on using this new building technology in housing construction. This is part of the strategy to speed up the home building process because it allows costs to be reduced by as much as half.

She said, "Cabinet was informed that the technology, which is already in use in the Dzivarasekwa flats project, involves two options, namely: brick and mortar, and concrete, said Minister Mutsvangwa. The housing designs will involve two and three-bedroomed flats, with social amenities such as water and sewer reticulation and electricity from renewable energy. The designs fit well into the smart city concept.

"The alternative technology will expedite works and save costs by up to half, with up to a thousand units being constructed in 15 months. This should enable Government to deliver 200 000 housing units by 2023. Construction materials will be produced locally, with the Harare Institute of Technology manufacturing the formers for the walling blocks.

"This year, 88 blocks of flats are being built in Harare's Dzivarasekwa, each block with 16 flats to give a total of 1 408 flats. The Government is building half and the private sector the other half. Treasury has provided funds in excess of \$1 billion in order for construction to commence."

Early in April 2021, the cabinet gave the green light to the Department of Roads within the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development to work on several projects.

This work involves taking over and repairing specific roads that fall under urban councils. This happens as the Second Republic, led by President Mnangagwa, escalates efforts to enhance service delivery and the attainment of Vision 2030.

Zimbabwe government will concentrate on transport infrastructure rehabilitation, construction, and upgrades to standards that are prescribed in the National Development Strategy. The main focus will be on ensuring that the transport sector plays its rightful role as an enabler for overall economic growth across the agriculture, mining, electricity, manufacturing, and tourism sectors.

Source;
<https://www.constructafrica.com/news/zimbabwe-treasury-allocates-us1b-housing-projects>

TECH COMPANY EXPANDS INTO REMOTE CONTROL FOR HEAVY EQUIPMENT

Teleo, a company building autonomous technology for heavy construction equipment, has announced deals with construction customers John Aarts Group, Teichert and Tomahawk Construction for remote-operated wheeled loaders, bulldozers, and dump trucks.

The company says that its tech helps contractors deal with the lack of workers – a recent survey from the Associated General Contractors of America found that 91% of construction firms are having difficulties finding workers to hire, driving up costs and project delays.

Teleo is introducing an incremental approach to autonomy with its system, Teleo Supervised Autonomy, which enables remote and semi-autonomous operations of any make and model of heavy construction equipment. A key benefit is that one operator can control multiple machines from the comfort of a command center.

"The construction industry is experiencing a growing skilled labor shortage," said Vinay Shet, co-founder and chief executive officer of Teleo. "We founded Teleo to help contractors supercharge their operators' efforts by turning their equipment into semi-autonomous machines. By moving the operator out of the cab of the machine and into a command center, we're also making the operator's role safer, comfortable, and more accessible."

Teleo works with contractors to identify the best use cases for the Teleo system, and handles everything from operator training to network implementation.

Source; <https://www.construction-europe.com/news/autonomous-tech-company-expands-into-remote-control-operation-for-heavy-equipment/8027130.article>



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A BETTER FUTURE IS POSSIBLE

SA RECORDS 2% ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR 2022

The South African economy produced more goods and services during 2022, expanding by 2% between 2021 and 2022, from N\$4,5 trillion to N\$4,6 trillion, statistics officials announced on the 08th of March 2023. This is despite its output dipping by 1,3% in the fourth quarter, compared to the previous three months, as load-shedding sinks operations in the neighbouring country. Transport, storage and communication made the largest positive impact, rising by 0,7% and contributing 0,1 of a percentage point to growth.

This was mainly due to increased economic activity in passenger land transport, air transport, and communication services. The official data shows that the finance, real estate and business services industry shrank by 2,3%. This was on the back of less economic activity in financial intermediation, insurance and pension funding and auxiliary activities.

Construction is in the worst shape, remaining 23,1% smaller than before the pandemic, and 2022 marked construction's sixth consecutive year of economic decline.

Source:

<https://www.namibian.com.na/120508/read/SA-records-2pct-economic-growth-for-2022>



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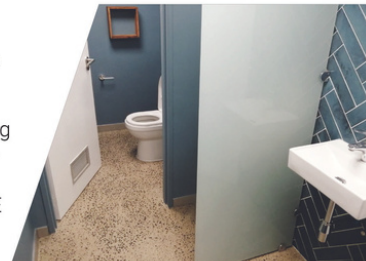
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CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IS SLUMPING AMID 'PATHETIC' GOVT INVESTMENT, SAYS ECONOMIST

Activity in SA's construction industry sharply contracted in the fourth quarter of 2022, with few encouraging signs owing to load shedding, rising interest rates, as well as a dearth of public sector spending, according to the latest Afrimat Construction Index.

The index, compiled by economist Roelof Botha, declined 2.2% in the fourth quarter compared to the third, amid a slump in the value of new buildings completed of almost a fifth, though it still recovered 1.9% year on

year. SA's GDP had shrunk 1.3% in the fourth quarter of 2022 on a quarterly basis, which came as a surprise to economists, who had expected modest growth.

"It's bad news", Botha told News24. "One would expect in a country like SA, with a huge and growing population, and very obvious infrastructure deficiencies, and a very obvious lack of sufficient housing in poorer areas, to do stuff like resuscitate the RDP housing programme and get cracking on infrastructure".

The index is a composite indicator of the level of activity in the building and construction sectors, with its nine constituents also including salaries and wages and retail trade sales. The best-performing indicator in the fourth quarter was the value of wholesale sales of construction materials, which rose 9.3% on an annual basis.

Source:

<https://www.news24.com/fin24/companies/construction-activity-is-slumping-amid-pathetic-govt-investment>