



MOOLAH

NEWSLETTER OF THE NAMIBIA BUILDING WORKERS PENSION FUND



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CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS TO JOIN NBWPF

The Namibia Building Workers Pension Fund (NBWPF) recently hosted a breakfast at the Am Weinberg Hotel for construction industry professionals. The purpose was to share general details about the fund but in particular to impart knowledge about the implications of recent rule amendments, that not only allow higher level contributions, but also now permits employers from other sectors to participate in the NBWPF to enable their employees to become members of the fund.

The NBWPF, established on 1 May 1990, is an approved fund by NAMFISA and is committed to contribute towards the social protection of employees in the construction sector. This includes the provision of retirement and disability benefits as well as benefits in the event of death. With a mission to provide a reliable and sustainable pension scheme, the fund aims to empower construction industry employees to plan for a financially secure future.

Other than contractors, architects, engineers, quantity surveyors had attended the business breakfast. Information was also shared about the mandatory requirement for employers to register their employees that are covered by the construction sector's gazetted Collective Agreement.

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CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONAL TO JOIN THE NBWPF

The Engineering Council of Namibia and the Namibia Council for Architects and Quantity Surveyors, as well as the Association of Consulting Engineers, Engineering Professions Association of Namibia, the Institute of Namibian Quantity Surveyors, the Namibian Institute of Architects, the Namibian Society of Engineers, and the Namibian Renewable Energy Industry Association sent out the invitations to the breakfast to their members, in support of the efforts of NBWPF and to provide them with information other pension funds in the market.

Whilst the provision of a pension fund is mandatory for workers on construction sites, the aim is to encourage employers to include all their employees and that employers of related industry professions – architects, engineers and quantity surveyors – make also provision of retirement benefits for themselves and their employees.

Mr Enwich Kazondu, principal officer of the NBWPF said: “We are reaching out to all professionals in the construction sector to join the NBWPF and register themselves and their employees with the fund. We have been created as an umbrella fund for the construction sector and really understand the industry. With the recent rule amendments we now can cater for all employers and employees in Namibia’s construction sector”.

There are currently deliberations on a national level about the introduction of a national pension fund, which is likely to be managed by the Namibian government. There is a degree of urgency by the authorities, to ensure optimal social protection for Namibian citizen.

This is in line with the guidelines and standards on social security systems, including pension funds, set by the ILO Convention 102. The construction sector is the only sector in Namibia that has mandatory stipulations for the provision of a pension fund.

Mr Gordon Goeieman, chairperson of the NBWPF trustees, and member of the executive committee of the Construction Industries Federation of Namibia (CIF) said: “We are extremely proud that we are ahead of the game and that our sector is one of the few, if not the only sector where the provision of a pension fund is mandatory.

“But let’s face it, the mandatory requirement will eventually extend to sectors beyond the construction industry. Taking into consideration the current global as well as our local economic environment, it becomes obvious that everyone needs to make provisions for retirement, starting as soon as possible.

“We are therefore reaching out to the professionals in our sector, in order to join the contractors and make provision for themselves and their employees so that there are adequate financial reserves at the point of retirement.”



NBWP ATTENDS ONGWEDIVA ANNUAL TRADE FAIR



NBWPF had a stand and exhibited at the 2023 Ongwediva Annual Trade Fair. We are pleased to say that many potential members and employers came to our stand to hear more about retirement planning and the benefits the NBWPF has to offer. Employers in the construction industry or related industries found out more how they can support their employees having an income when they have reached retirement age.

It was also an opportunity for the NBWPF to increase brand visibility to raise awareness about the NBWPF being an umbrella fund for the construction sector. However, when attending the OATF, representatives of the fund also took the opportunity to conduct ad hoc market research and also understand customer preferences. To remain competitive it is also always important to conduct analyses in order to understand the offering and benefits of competitors. This helps the NBWPF to stay up-to-date and competitive in the market.

It is always important to interact with your clientele and to be able to present the pension fund product and services directly with one's potential customers. This helps us to answer any questions, give advice as well as to build trust in what we have to offer.

This is particularly important, after recent rule amendments that allow higher level contributions and widening the scope to also include professionals in the construction sector.



Money Saving Tips

- **Use cash envelopes:** Divide your income into different envelopes for different expenses, such as groceries, transportation, and water & electricity. This helps you visually track your spending and avoid overspending.
- **Seek out community savings groups:** In some communities, people pool their money together in savings groups. Each member contributes a small amount regularly, and the total amount is given to a different member each month. This can be a way to save and access funds when needed.
- **Look for informal savings options:** Some individuals or businesses may offer informal savings services, where you can deposit small amounts of money regularly. While these may not offer the same level of security as a bank, they can still help you save.
- **Seek financial guidance:** Look for community organisations or non-profit groups that offer financial literacy programs. They can provide guidance on budgeting, saving, and making informed financial decisions.



ARE YOU THINKING OF BUYING SOMETHING ON HIRE PURCHASE?

Ever so often you will have a friend or a family member of yours that asks you to help you out with their cash flow situation. Sometimes we do not mind to help, especially if it is close to the end of the month and there have been unforeseen expenditures that your friend or your next of kin had not anticipated.

However, one of the really difficult situations arise when something was bought on hire purchase and previous payments were skipped. Then the pressure is high to pay, especially if they are threatened to have the item repossessed.

It is always tempting to buy something new. Sometimes it even makes us feel better - mostly only on a temporary basis.

Sometimes things are bought on hire purchase before great celebrations and receiving guests at our home... and we want to make a good impression, don't we.

One has to be very clever though & really do the calculations and think about whether the additional financial burden is worth it.



WHY NOT TO BUY THINGS ON HIRE PURCHASE

Buying things on hire purchase may not be a good idea in general but especially for workers in the construction sector. Currently, the Namibian economy experiences high unemployment and continued retrenchments. We would therefore want to guard you not take unwise financial decision and buy something on account:

Financial burden: Hire purchase agreements often come with high interest rates, which can significantly increase the overall cost of the item. For low-income workers, this can create a heavy financial burden, making it difficult to meet regular payments.

Uncertain job stability: Unsteady jobs and the risk of retrenchments can make it challenging to commit to regular payments. If you lose your job or experience a reduction in income, it can become difficult to keep up with the hire purchase payments, potentially leading to debt and financial struggles.

Limited flexibility: Hire purchase agreements typically have fixed terms and conditions. If your financial situation changes or you need to adjust your budget, it may be difficult to change the payment terms. This lack of flexibility can be problematic, especially if you face unexpected expenses or income fluctuations.

Risk of repossession: If you fail to make payments on a hire purchase agreement, there is a risk of repossession. Losing the item you purchased can have a big impact on your daily life and may further increase financial difficulties.

In such an environment, it is advisable to explore alternative options:

Saving up: Try and save the money first to purchase the item outright rather than taking on debt through hire purchase. This approach allows you to avoid high interest rates and financial obligations.

Second-hand items: Consider purchasing second-hand items that are in good condition. They are often more affordable and can still serve your needs effectively.

Borrowing or sharing: Find the possibility of borrowing the item from family or friends, or sharing the cost with others who may need it. This can help reduce the financial burden and provide more flexibility.

It's really important to carefully think about your financial situation, consider the risks involved, and explore alternative options before deciding on a hire purchase agreement, particularly in an uncertain economic environment.



Spinach & Bean Soup

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons of vegetable oil
- one large onion (chopped)
- 1-2 garlic cloves (crushed)
- 1 1/2 cup celery
- 2 teaspoons of dry mixed herbs
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1/2 teaspoon of black pepper
- 2 litre of vegetable stock
(4 cubes of Knorr Vegetable Stock)
- juice of 1/2 lemon
- 500 g pasta shells
- 1 can of 410g of white beans
- 1-2 tins of crushed tomatoes
- 4 cups or one pillow of spinach

Instructions

- Select a large enough pot and put it on medium heat.
- Heat the oil in the pot
- Add the onions and cook
- Once the onions are a bit golden, you can add the garlic and celery. Cook and stir for about 5 minutes.
- Then you can add the herbs and the salt and pepper.
- To make the chicken stock, pour boiling water over 4 cubes of Knorr Vegetable Stock and stir well.
- Now you can pour in the vegetable stock into the pot and bring the mixture to boil.
- Add the lemon juice and stir.
- Add the pasta and let the mixture boil on low heat for 8 minutes.
- Now add the beans out of the can and the spinach and let it cook for another 10 minutes on low heat.
- Taste and add more salt and pepper, if needed.

This is a really healthy and cheaper dish. It does not include any meat, You will find that the beans are a good alternative source of protein.



LIVING HEALTHY - KNOW HOW MUCH ALCOHOL YOU DRINK

As December is coming closer, it is wise that we look at our alcohol drinking habits. Spring has also arrived, when we tend to spend more time socialising with our friends and family.

Of course, it is entirely an individual choice whether or not you consume alcohol. However, do you ever ask yourself how much alcohol is "safe to drink", e.g. how many beers or glasses of wine are safe to drink without damaging your health in the long-term?

There are many guidelines issued by various organisations and authorities. If it is of interest to you, a lot of information is published on the Internet. You can also obtain more information from Namibia Breweries' www.edudrink.com.

Though opinions vary, and it also best to speak to your health practitioner. But a guideline would be "no more than 3 drinks in one day for a woman, and no more than 7 drinks a week" in total. For men, it is: "no more than 4 drinks a day and no more than 14 drinks per week" in total. Of course this depends on the ABV (alcohol by volume) of the drink is.

Here is an example: One drink can be either a 150 ml glass of wine with 14% alcohol content, or one 330ml bottle of beer with 4% alcohol content, or one shot of hard liquor.

If you are indeed drinking alcohol, get to know yourself and know how much are drinking. If you are not consuming alcohol, you are much better off and can save a lot of money too.

