



Hats Off



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Building Namibia's Future Issue

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CONSTRUCTION NEWSLETTER



2026: EXECUTION, ALIGNMENT AND CONSTRUCTION CAPACITY

Namibia enters 2026 with a rare combination of opportunity and pressure. Namibia's offshore oil discoveries, ambitious green hydrogen programme, expanding renewable energy projects and renewed mining investment have created genuine momentum. Yet the defining question for this year is no longer whether Namibia has potential. It is whether Namibia can translate that potential into structured implementation under real-world constraints.

For the construction sector, 2026 is shaping up as a year of capacity testing. Large-scale developments require more than procurement announcements. They demand consistent funding flows, clear regulatory sequencing, predictable approvals and stable conditions for contractors to mobilise and deliver. In an environment where margins remain tight and competition is increasing, the sector's ability to plan and execute will determine how much local participation is possible in the emerging project cycle.

The energy story sits at the centre of this moment. Analysts are watching whether offshore oil and gas developments move from appraisal into firm investment commitments and whether hydrogen planning moves beyond feasibility toward bankable infrastructure. In parallel, Namibia's renewables programme is increasingly defined by practical delivery rather than aspirational statements. Biomass and solar expansion projects are moving forward, while discussions on longer-term baseload options indicate that energy planning is widening in scope.

At the same time, Namibia's economic environment remains constrained. Fiscal discipline is necessary, and public infrastructure must be prioritised with clear sequencing. That means completing what is already underway before expanding commitments into new corridors.

It also means ensuring that municipal infrastructure keeps pace with housing and urban growth, because the construction sector's stability depends not only on megaprojects but also on a reliable base of public and private projects that sustain SMEs and subcontractor networks.

Ultimately, 2026 will test alignment. It will test whether policy coherence matches investor expectations. It will test whether project pipelines translate into shovel-ready works at a pace the industry can absorb. And it will test whether Namibian contractors are sufficiently capitalised, skilled and operationally prepared to participate meaningfully in what could become a multi-year growth cycle.

Source/URL: <https://www.namibiansun.com/local-news/2026-namibia%E2%80%99s-make-or-break-year2026-01-12181021>

MOPANE INVESTMENT OUTLOOK: FID UNCERTAIN, MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR POTENTIAL

At this stage, the Mopane development remains pre-FID, meaning the investment is not yet guaranteed. TotalEnergies' target of 2028 depends on successful appraisal drilling in 2026–2027, cost validation, oil price outlook, and regulatory approvals. However, the company's consolidation of operatorship and continued exploration signals strong strategic commitment.

While no official capital figure has been announced, comparable deepwater projects suggest total development costs could run into several billion US dollars, potentially exceeding US\$10 billion over the full lifecycle.



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EMPLOYERS CALL FOR PRACTICAL LABOUR POLICY IN 2026

As Namibia approaches a year of potential expansion, employers continue to emphasise that labour policy must remain grounded in economic and operational realities. The Namibian Employers' Federation has cautioned that while worker protection is essential, policy design must avoid creating unintended cost pressures that reduce businesses' ability to grow and hire.

For construction, the issue is particularly sensitive. Projects are often tendered months before execution, and contract pricing rarely allows for sudden escalation in compliance burdens without affecting viability. In labour-intensive work such as civil engineering and building construction, cost increases translate directly into project affordability. The sector therefore benefits from stable regulatory timelines, predictable implementation and consultation processes that allow employers to plan.

The Federation has also highlighted the importance of structured engagement between social partners, including advance publication of consultation calendars. Predictability strengthens the quality of submissions and reduces reactive policymaking. In a year when industrial and infrastructure projects may accelerate, a practical approach to labour policy can protect both job creation and business sustainability.

Source/URL: <https://nambusinessexpress.com/?p=12506>

BUILDING PLANS: JANUARY VOLATILITY AND WHAT IT REALLY SIGNALS

Windhoek's January building plans data indicates moderation compared to December levels, with approvals down to 100 plans valued at N\$101.1 million. Completion activity was subdued, with only nine projects finalised. Read superficially, this could be interpreted as weakening momentum. In reality, January often reflects seasonal and administrative patterns rather than structural decline.

Holiday shutdowns influence contractor mobilisation and inspection cycles, while financing approvals and project rollovers also shape early-year outcomes. What is more telling is the year-on-year picture: the value of approvals remained significantly higher than January of the previous year, suggesting improved confidence in new works even if completions lag behind.

Residential approvals held value growth despite slight volume moderation, while additions to properties continued to play a stabilising role. These incremental investments often reflect household decisions to improve existing assets rather than embark on entirely new builds, and they can provide important continuity for contractors during uncertain cycles.

The key point for 2026 is that building activity is not yet on a smooth upward trajectory. It remains uneven, shaped by financing conditions and project readiness. But the underlying approval values suggest that demand is not collapsing; it is consolidating and waiting for better timing and conditions.

Source/URL: <https://ijg.net/research/wp-content/uploads/Building-Plans-2026-01.pdf>

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OFFSHORE OIL: MOVING FROM APPRAISAL TO COMMITMENT

Namibia's Orange Basin discoveries have shifted the country's profile internationally, but 2026 is expected to be decisive in determining whether that profile becomes a production reality. Offshore oil and gas developments remain anchored in appraisal outcomes and the commercial confidence required for final investment decisions. The Venus project is widely anticipated as the key marker of this transition.

For the construction sector, an offshore project is never only an offshore project. Marine development requires onshore logistics bases, port capacity, storage systems, transport upgrades and specialised services. A positive investment decision would likely accelerate planning for these enabling works and intensify demand for civil engineering, mechanical installations and logistics infrastructure.

At the same time, investor confidence depends on policy coherence. Namibia must balance competitiveness with national benefit, including local participation objectives and infrastructure readiness. The year ahead will test whether regulatory processes, fiscal terms and institutional coordination can match the scale of the opportunity.

Source/URL:
<https://namibiaoilandgas.com/2026/02/18/namibias-quest-for-energy-diversification-from-orange-basin-oil-to-green-hydrogen-and-nuclear/>

OTJIKOTO BIOMASS POWER: A CONSTRUCTION MILESTONE WITH WIDER IMPLICATIONS

The Otjikoto Biomass Power Station has reached a tangible construction milestone with the arrival of steam drums required for its two 20 MW boilers. The project demonstrates the increasing technical complexity of Namibia's energy infrastructure and the level of planning required to transport and install heavy equipment as abnormal loads.

Beyond construction milestones, the broader significance lies in grid stability and import reduction. Namibia has long relied on imports during peak demand, exposing the economy to external supply risks. Diversified generation, including biomass, improves resilience. The project also links power generation with environmental management through the use of encroacher bush as feedstock, integrating land rehabilitation and energy production into one industrial system.

From a labour perspective, the project's employment impact during construction is substantial. Such projects create temporary employment at scale while also stimulating the development of supply chains, particularly in fuel sourcing and transport services.

Source/URL: <https://www.africa-press.net/namibia/all-news/steam-drums-arrive-for-otjikoto-biomass-power-station>.

ROSH PINAH SOLAR PARK: EMBEDDED GENERATION AS INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

The Rosh Pinah Solar Park expansion reflects a growing industrial model: embedded generation designed to stabilise supply and improve cost certainty for energy-intensive operations. With an 11 MWp expansion underway, total installed capacity is expected to rise to approximately 16.3 MWp. For mining operations, energy is not merely an input; it is a strategic risk factor. Embedded renewables reduce reliance on grid stability and help control long-term energy costs. For the construction sector, such projects create recurring opportunities, particularly in civil works, cabling, electrical integration and system maintenance. As Namibia moves deeper into energy diversification, embedded projects of this kind may become increasingly common across mining and industrial operators. They represent a steady, technically demanding segment of the construction pipeline.

Source/URL: <https://www.aitsafrika.com/business/rosh-pinah-solar-park-enters-next-phase2026-01-20181815>



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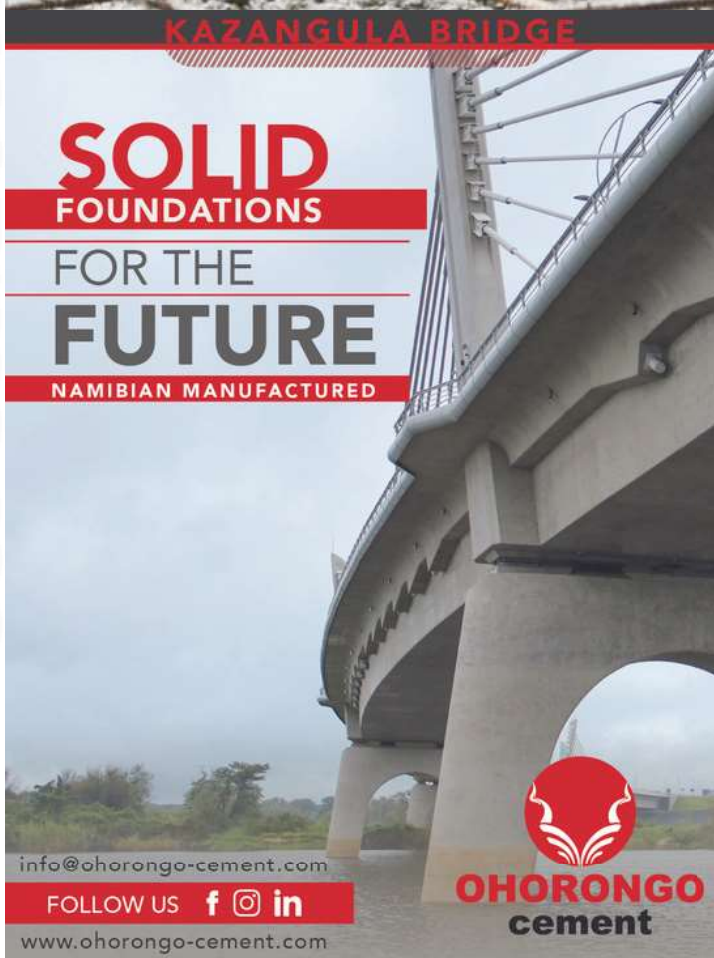




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HYPHEN: CATALYTIC FINANCING AND THE SHIFT TOWARD BANKABILITY

Green hydrogen remains Namibia's flagship long-term industrial ambition, and 2026 is increasingly defined by whether that ambition becomes bankable infrastructure. The African Development Bank's approval of a US\$10 million loan through SEFA to Hyphen Hydrogen Energy is significant precisely because it targets front-end engineering design, the critical phase in which projects move from concept into investment-ready form.

In hydrogen developments of this scale, technical readiness is inseparable from financing credibility. Engineering design work clarifies capital requirements, identifies infrastructure sequencing and strengthens the project's risk profile for private investors. Namibia's hydrogen ambition involves not only electrolyzers and renewable generation but also desalination, pipelines, transmission systems and port facilities. Each component requires specialised construction capacity and strict compliance with environmental and social standards.

The implication for contractors is that hydrogen infrastructure will not resemble traditional building projects. It will bring industrial-grade standards into wider practice, raising expectations around documentation, safety systems and environmental compliance. Those firms who prepare early and build capability will be best placed to participate meaningfully.

Source/URL: <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/african-development-bank-approves-10-million-catalyse-namibias-large-green-hydrogen-project-89480>

THE WIDER HYDROGEN LANDSCAPE: ECOSYSTEM GROWTH AND INDUSTRIAL LINKAGES

The Hyphen project sits within a wider landscape of hydrogen activity in Namibia, including green iron initiatives, refuelling infrastructure and pilot projects that demonstrate industrial application beyond export.

This ecosystem growth matters because it strengthens skills development and increases the likelihood that hydrogen becomes embedded in Namibia's industrial economy rather than remaining a single export story.

At the same time, the scale of hydrogen ambition introduces a labour market challenge. Electrical engineering, instrumentation, control systems and specialised mechanical skills are in demand across hydrogen, mining expansion, renewables and conventional construction. Without careful training expansion and planning coordination, the risk is that labour competition inflates costs and slows delivery.

Hydrogen therefore represents both opportunity and systems challenge. Its success will depend not only on capital and technology but on coordinated national planning that links industrial development to workforce preparedness.

Source/URL: <https://gh2.org/countries/namibia>

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ROSH PINAH: PASTE FILL PLANT AND EXPANSION EFFICIENCY

At Rosh Pinah, the commissioning of Namibia's first paste fill plant marks a significant operational milestone within the RP2.0 expansion programme.

Paste backfill systems improve underground mining efficiency, reduce dilution and lower the volume of tailings deposited on surface, supporting both productivity and environmental management objectives.

The RP2.0 expansion remains a major industrial construction undertaking. As throughput increases toward 1.3 million tonnes per year, the knock-on effects include stronger demand for mechanical installations, civil upgrades and supporting services.

Such projects reinforce the value of industrial construction capability within Namibia's contractor base.

Source/URL: <https://www.namibian.com.na/namibia-to-get-first-paste-fill-plant/>



KOMBAT MINE: RESTARTING A HISTORIC ASSET AND RENEWING COPPER CONFIDENCE

The restart of Kombat Mine represents more than the reopening of a historic asset; it signals renewed confidence in Namibia's copper pipeline at a time when regional demand for industrial minerals remains strong.

Construction work has begun, with operations expected to resume in the fourth quarter of 2026. Investment includes underground rehabilitation, upgrades to processing systems and planned adoption of sensor-based ore sorting to improve efficiency.

For construction firms, mine restarts typically generate multi-year demand. Early works focus on civil upgrades, electrical systems, refurbishment of operational infrastructure and accommodation capacity for workers. As the mine stabilises, downstream impacts extend into logistics services, maintenance contracts and local procurement.

The Kombat case also illustrates an important principle: mining projects can provide steady, structured work when public infrastructure is volatile. For contractors planning their 2026–2027 pipeline, mining momentum remains a key stabiliser.

Source/URL:

<https://theextractormagazine.com/2026/02/18/kombat-mine-to-restart-in-2026-as-construction-begins-on-historic-copper-asset/>

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NAMWASTE: ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AS INDUSTRIAL READINESS

The operational launch of Namibia's first fully compliant hazardous waste management facility near Arandis is a structural development with long-term implications. Hazardous waste capacity has historically been a constraint for mining operations and industrial development, particularly as Namibia expands its activity in sectors where environmental compliance is increasingly tied to international financing and partnership requirements.

The Namwaste Management Facility is positioned as an end-to-end solution covering hazardous waste collection, controlled transport, tracking, treatment and storage. This enables stronger regulatory enforcement and traceability from origin to final disposal, improving Namibia's environmental governance foundation at a time when ESG scrutiny is intensifying.

For the construction and industrial sectors, the practical value is substantial. A compliant waste system supports investor confidence and reduces systemic risk. It strengthens Namibia's ability to support industrial expansion while maintaining environmental stewardship standards expected by global partners.

This is not a peripheral development. It is part of the enabling infrastructure that allows mining, oil and gas, and industrial projects to proceed with greater regulatory credibility.

Source/URL: <https://neweralive.na/namwaste-facility-starts-operations-namibias-first-fully-compliant-hazardous-waste-management/>

NAMIBIA SECURES GREEN PORT DEAL WITH KOREA AND AFDB

Namibia has signed a strategic partnership with the Government of Korea and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to develop a comprehensive 10-year Green Port Policy, Strategy, Investment Plan and Implementation Roadmap for Walvis Bay and Lüderitz. The agreement forms part of the Namibia-Korea Green Port Strategy Programme, under which Namport has been selected as a flagship beneficiary.

The initiative will provide technical support and funding to modernise port infrastructure, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote low- and zero-carbon fuels, strengthen climate resilience, and improve marine ecosystem protection. Once priority projects are identified through feasibility studies, they may qualify for AfDB financing.

The partnership positions Namibia at the forefront of sustainable port development in Africa, aligning maritime growth with environmental responsibility while strengthening competitiveness, trade efficiency and long-term industrial development.

Source/URL: <https://neweralive.na/namibia-inks-green-port-deal-with-korea-afdb/>



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DBN: LIQUIDITY, SME PARTICIPATION AND THE CONSTRUCTION PIPELINE

The Development Bank of Namibia's approval of N\$912.7 million in funding during the 2024/25 financial year strengthens liquidity in priority sectors, including housing and construction. The Bank's emphasis on SME support, women-owned enterprises and youth-owned businesses matters because contractor participation is ultimately constrained not only by skills, but by balance sheets.

Construction requires working capital. Tendering often requires performance guarantees. Project delivery requires the capacity to bridge payment cycles and carry costs before invoices are settled. In that context, improved development finance availability can make the difference between SMEs participating meaningfully in procurement pipelines or remaining confined to marginal subcontracts.

DBN's strengthened funding base, including international credit facilities and sovereign-backed arrangements, increases its ability to support projects aligned with national development priorities. In a year when industrial and infrastructure developments may accelerate, liquidity access will be one of the most decisive factors shaping local participation.

Source/URL: <https://thebrief.com.na/2026/01/dbn-approves-n912-7m-in-loans-funds-49-smes-creates-1429-jobs/>

REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXT: WHAT IT MEANS FOR NAMIBIA

Global construction growth is expected to remain moderate in 2026, with emerging markets driving expansion. However, labour shortages and cost pressures remain structural challenges, and payment delays continue to affect contractor liquidity in many markets.

Regional integration initiatives in Southern Africa, including the advancement of one-stop border post planning, reflect a wider push to reduce logistics friction and strengthen trade competitiveness. For Namibia, the regional environment reinforces the strategic value of completing corridors and strengthening port-adjacent logistics infrastructure.

Namibia's advantage lies in relative stability and clear industrial ambition. But competitiveness will be determined by delivery: disciplined infrastructure sequencing, predictable procurement processes, investment in technical skills and financing structures that enable local firms to participate at scale.

Source/URLs:

<https://www.ecofinagency.com/news-infrastructures/2002-53093-five-southern-african-countries-advance-one-stop-border-plan-with-dp-world-afcta>

https://atradius.cn/en_CN/knowledge-and-research/reports/industry-trends-construction-february-2026

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STALLED ROAD PROJECTS AND THE LOGISTICS HUB AMBITION

Namibia's goal of strengthening its position as a regional logistics gateway depends on corridor reliability. In that context, concerns raised by the Parliamentary Standing Committee about stalled road projects are strategically significant. The Committee's observations point to a familiar but damaging pattern: foundational works completed, but projects delayed at the final stage because resources were not sustained through completion.

For the construction sector, this creates several pressures at once. Interrupted projects increase mobilisation costs, erode contractor cashflow and weaken the confidence required for companies to invest in equipment and staffing. For the economy, delayed completion reduces corridor performance and undermines Namibia's competitive offering to landlocked neighbours.

Engineers on site indicated that affected road sections could be completed within nine to ten months if resources were secured. The implication is clear: completion discipline can deliver faster results than dispersing limited funds across too many new commitments.

If Namibia wants infrastructure to support industrial growth, including mining and energy logistics, prioritising the completion of existing works will be one of the most cost-effective decisions available.

Source/URL:

<https://thebrief.com.na/2026/02/stalled-road-projects-undermine-namibias-trade-and-logistics-hub-ambitions/>



HAVANA EXTENSIONS: STORM-WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND URBAN RESILIENCE

In Windhoek, progress on storm-water and culvert infrastructure in Havana Extensions 8 and 11 highlights the practical importance of municipal works. These projects are not only about roads; they determine whether communities have safe access during rainy seasons and whether housing roll-outs can proceed on serviced land.

The City of Windhoek has indicated that construction is progressing well, with completion expected by April 2026. Electricity infrastructure implementation is also underway. Once servicing is completed, the enabling conditions for low-cost housing development will be in place under the Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme.

From a construction sector perspective, municipal infrastructure provides vital continuity, particularly for SMEs and subcontractors who may not immediately access megaproject pipelines. It also strengthens the broader urban environment in which construction activity takes place. Urban resilience projects reduce the long-term costs of flood damage, improve mobility and support more predictable planning.

Source/URL:

<https://economist.com.na/103804/extra/construction-of-storm-water-and-culvert-infrastructure-in-havana-extension-8-and-11-going-well/>

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