



MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION

2nd Edition

LABOUR NEWS

June 2024



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- Round table on Biomass Value Chain and Employment Creation a Success
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FROM THE PRO'S DESK

Maria Hedimbi
Chief Public Relations Officer

Welcome to our second edition for 2024/25 Financial Year. You may recall that we use to publish the Newsletter once a Quarter. We thought timely news is of essence, hence decided to start bringing to you at least two publications per Quarter. Our last edition was in May 2024 and this one makes it the second edition for Quarter 1 and this Financial Year respectively.

Unemployment remains a huge challenge for this country and the Ministry has been busy for the past two months with various engagements that aim to answer this challenge.

In this edition, we enlighten you on the induction for the newly appointed Employment Services Board (ESB) in May 2024. This happened just a month when Hon. Utoni Nujoma appointed the 4th ESB. The Board was appointed at a time when the Namibian labour market is faced with a high unemployment rate, which is mostly affecting young people. For this reason, the Executive Director, Lydia Indombo reminded them of the mammoth task ahead of them and appealed to them to make recommendations to the Minister that aim to arrest the situation.

Namibia is fortunate enough to have been selected as one of the pioneering pathfinder countries for the United Nations (UN) Global Accelerator (GA) on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions. As such, the Ministry also hosted a second Roundtable on- Biomass Value Chain and Employment Creation. The first roundtable was on Agriculture Production and Employment Creation. According to Ms. Indombo, these are some of the areas where Namibia can achieve impactful results in employment creation.

The Cabinet of the Republic of Namibia has endorsed the introduction of a National Minimum Wage, at a rate of N\$18.00 per hour effective January 2025. This leads us in the right direction toward achieving Namibia's Constitutional principle of ensuring a decent standard of living for all in Namibia. So far, only domestic and agricultural sectors have been allowed to phase in incrementally over a period of three consecutive years. However, full details will be published in the Government Gazette in July 2024.

Last but not least, we appreciate the effort of the Ministerial Wellness Committee for having planned a series of activities that aim to enhance staff wellness. Kudos colleagues, Paul Dreschler once said "Good health is good business."

Esteemed colleagues, this Newsletter is yours.... is ours.... Kindly send us your contributions of any kind...be it an opinion piece, a story, a poem, or just a picture(s) of you and/or colleagues while on duty. All contributions should be in line with this Ministry's mandate. The editorial team will however have a final say on whether to consider/amend or reject your contribution. Kindly email them to: PublicRelationsOfficer@mol.gov.na

Happy readings

Maria

CONSULTATIONS ON THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH BILL UNDERWAY



Participants during the Stakeholders' engagement on Occupational Safety and Health Bill.

The Ministry has started with the stakeholders' consultations on the Occupational Safety and Health Bill which is set to be tabled in Parliament after all due processes. The first stakeholders' consultation was conducted in Windhoek in June 2024 whereas consultations in other towns such as Swakopmund, Rundu, Ongwediva, Tsumeb, and Keetmanshoop will follow shortly.

Addressing the stakeholders in Windhoek, Executive Director, Lydia Indombo described the OSH Bill as a significant stepping stone toward the protection of workers' safety and health in the working environment. According to Indombo, protection of the safety and health of workers remains one of the Government's top priorities. "The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation is committed to promoting and realizing, in good faith and in accordance with the ILO Constitution, the principles concerning the fundamental right to a safe and healthy working environment." Highlights Indombo.

The Executive Director says a safe and healthy working environment is an enabler of performance, productivity, and eventually economic growth. She called on participants to shape the Bill into a framework that would effectively and efficiently safeguard lives, promotes dignity in labour, and foster environments where every individual can thrive without fear of harm or injury.

Speaking at the same occasion was the ILO Occupational Safety and Health Specialist, Peneyambeko Munkawa who noted that OSH law in Namibia has been long overdue while also admitting that no country in the world has found OSH law formulation as a walk in the park. "The world of work keeps transforming and in so doing changes the face OSH drastically and unexpectedly." These dynamics according to her, prompt ILO to develop more OSH-related standards to respond to ever-growing OSH needs.

She further highlighted that the OSH Bill is inspired by relevant international instruments such as ILO Conventions, C155, C187, C161, and C190.

The Bill makes a provision for the establishment of the Occupational Safety and Health Commission to be under the Ministry of Labour, whose functions will be amongst others to promote the preventative culture for safety and health; research, investigate or inquiry to emerging issues, crises and any other matter relating to occupational safety and health as well as to adapt the application of standards and management systems related to occupational safety and health.

The Bill further allows for occupational health services whereby monitoring the working environment, medical surveillance and provision of employee wellness are articulated. It further provides for the duties and rights in relation to occupational safety and health whereby the general duties of employers and persons in charge of premises; duty of conducting a risk assessment; duty to provide protective equipment or clothing; right to nominate and elect safety and health representatives as well as registration of workplace among others are defined. The Bill also takes into account administration whereby appointment of approved inspection authorities, codes practices, ethics and conduct is clearly defined; violations, disputes, penalties and appeals.

The consultation was attended by social partners, OSH experts and relevant stakeholders.

ROUNDTABLE ON BIOMASS VALUE CHAIN AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION A SUCCESS



Lydia H. Indombo
Executive Director

In an effort to tackle youth unemployment and promote sustainable growth, the Ministry of Labour in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) hosted a roundtable discussion on 15 May 2024, focusing on the potential of the biomass value chain for job creation. The roundtable discussions were officiated by the Executive Director, Lydia Indombo, and were attended by a diverse group of stakeholders from the government, the private sector, and civil society.

Namibia's recognition as a United Nations Pathfinder Country in the Global Accelerator of Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions (GA) in 2023 highlights the commitment to finding innovative solutions to the pressing issue of unemployment.

This roundtable marked a significant step towards harnessing the country's rich biomass resources to benefit both the environment and its people. Indombo alluded to the challenges facing the nation's youth. "Many of our youth are despairing about their futures. Their desperation and frustration are profound and cannot be ignored. The future of Namibia depends on finding real solutions to the complex problem of employment creation," she expressed, capturing the collective concern and hope shared by many. The roundtable covered several crucial areas necessary for integrating the biomass value chain into Namibia's economy.

Discussions on environmental and social sustainability, coupled with private sector diligence for decent work, emphasized the importance of responsible practices and protecting the workforce. Participants explored ways to add value and develop markets within the biomass sector and its related sub-sectors.

Emphasis was placed on skills development and training to build capacity within the biomass industry. Strategies for creating decent and sustainable jobs were also a focal point, as well as developing strong financial models to support infrastructure and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), alongside integrating social protection measures.

Indombo highlighted the importance of collaboration, stating, "We are aware of the complexity of employment creation and know that we cannot reverse unemployment without a well- across government, the private sector, and civil society. The Global Accelerator offers the opportunity to break out of the silos in which many of our government institutions operate and to form effective partnerships with the private sector and civil society." The event promoted an atmosphere of inclusivity and open their perspectives and ideas.

By leveraging the dynamic biomass sector, Namibia aims to create transformative job opportunities and enhance social protection, paving the way for a brighter and more sustainable future. This roundtable exemplifies Namibia's dedication to addressing its employment challenges through innovative and sustainable solutions. As the country continues to build on existing programs and plans, the collaborative efforts of all involved will be crucial in achieving tangible and lasting results in job creation and social protection.



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES BOARD INDUCTED



Employment Services Board pictured with Hon. Utoni Nujoma and Hon. Hafeni Ndemula. Archive Photo

On May 22, 2024, the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, and Employment Creation held an induction initiative for the newly inaugurated Employment Services Board (ESB) at the Mercure Hotel in Windhoek. Executive Director Lydia Indombo delivered the welcoming remarks, highlighting the critical role the Board will play in addressing Namibia's pressing labour market challenges. The event marked the beginning of a three-year tenure for the Board, which was inaugurated by Hon. Utoni Nujoma in April 2024.

In her speech, Indombo emphasized the urgency of tackling the high unemployment rate in the country, stating that "Namibia is pressed by many labour market challenges with a high unemployment rate topping the list. The nation is looking upon the Ministry to create jobs for the job seekers who are unemployed but available for gainful employment in exchange for their skills and knowledge."

She expressed confidence in the newly appointed members' ability to provide valuable expertise and drive significant progress in employment creation initiatives. Indombo urged the Board to focus its agenda on mechanisms that would effectively coordinate employment efforts.

The induction program also focused on the importance of tripartism, involving government, employers, workers, and experts from relevant disciplines. Indombo reinforced the Ministry's commitment to this principle, noting, "We believe that tripartism is the foundation of social dialogue. It promotes democracy, sustainable development, social justice, as well as peace and stability."

The Executive Director encouraged Board members to engage with the management and staff of the Ministry to gain a comprehensive understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

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The induction ceremony served as a pivotal moment for the ESB, setting the stage for collaborative efforts to address unemployment, income inequality, and poverty in Namibia. The Ministry of Labour anticipates tangible outcomes and positive impacts from the Boards' initiatives, driven by the members's commitment and perseverance. With the collective efforts of all stakeholders, the Board aims to shape a robust, dynamic, and inclusive labour market for the benefits of all Namibians.



NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE APPROVED



Hon. Utoni Nujoma
Minister

Cabinet has endorsed the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation's decision to issue a Wage Order to introduce the National Minimum Wage (NMW), effective January 2025. The National Minimum Wage is set at N\$18.00 per hour and is subject to review after two years of implementation.

The introduction of the NMW does not replace the bargaining power as it simply aims to set a floor Wage, especially for the most lowly paid employees.

It is prohibited for employers to reduce wages of their employees and therefore employers who are currently paying more than the anticipated NMW must not reduce the salaries of their workers to N\$18.00 per hour. The NMW is barely MINIMUM and not a ceiling wage.

For Domestic Workers, the NMW will be phased in incrementally over a period of three (3) years, whereby they will be paid N\$12.02 per hour during the first year of the introduction of the NMW; N\$15.01 per hour in the second year and subsequently an amount of N\$18.00 per hour in the third year. Domestic Workers are currently paid a minimum of N\$9.03 per hour as per the Wage Order for Domestic Workers.

Employees in the Agricultural Sector who are currently paid a minimum of N\$6.00 per hours plus pay in-kind as per the Collective Agreement in the Agricultural Sector will be paid N\$10.00 per hour in the first year, N\$14.00 per hour in the second year and N\$18.00 per hour in the third year, exclusive of in-kind payments.

Hon. Utoni Nujoma appointed a Wages Commission on NMW in February 2021 who conducted a nationwide investigation to investigate all relevant industries; report and make recommendations to the Minister on a proposed NMW, which shall apply to all employees, except to related categories of employees specifically exempted by the Minister in a Wage Order, and on related supplementary minimum conditions of employment.

The Commission conducted a six-month investigation whereby the public including trade unions and employers' organizations were invited to submit written representations concerning a National Minimum Wage and related supplementary terms and conditions of employment.

Once implemented, the NMW will help in improving the wages of the lowest-paid workers; reducing income inequality; alleviating poverty and improving individual and household income; and achieving a decent standard of living for all. Article 95 (i) of the Namibian Constitution lays the basis for a National Minimum Wage as it requires the State to adopt policies that aim to "insure that workers are paid a living wage adequate for the maintenance of a decent standard of living and the enjoyment of social and cultural opportunities."

A Notice will be issued in a Government Gazette in July 2024 with full details of the NMW.

MLIREC PARTICIPATES IN UNAM CAREER SEMINAR

The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation participated in a career seminar at the University of Namibia in May 2024. The Ministry participated in the Expo to educate students on career development, particularly improving job-hunting skills.

The Ministry's representatives emphasized the importance of effective job-hunting techniques, highlighting key strategies such as updating resumes, tracking job applications, sending follow-up emails, engaging with professionals, signing up with recruitment agencies, and learning job-related keywords to enhance interview preparations.

The session also included an introduction to the Namibia Integrated Employment Information System (NIEIS). Additionally, practical advice was offered on writing CVs and cover letters, preparing for public speaking, and ensuring students are ready to craft their resumes effectively.

Psychometric assessment was also covered, defined as the measurement of personality functioning and factors related to a person's job and career. Various aspects of psychometric tests were explained, including personality tests that evaluate underlying psychological constructs influencing behaviour in different situations.



Hilma Kasheeta, a Psychological Counselor and Martha Silvanus, Employment Officer addressing the audience.

Aptitude tests assess the ability to perform and learn specific skills through education or experience, while interest tests evaluate enthusiasm for particular professions. The benefits of completing psychometric testing for career development were highlighted.

Overall, the seminar provided valuable insights and practical tips for students to enhance their job hunting skills and career preparedness.



A group of youth who attended the MLIREC Career Seminar at UNAM.



MINISTRY'S WELLNESS COMMITTEE HOSTS A HEALTH AND WELLNESS SESSION TO BOOST STAFF WELL-BEING



Staff members in attendance.

The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation's Wellness Committee hosted a health and wellness session for staff members on May 21st. The purpose of this session was to improve staff members' health and well-being through educational programs that encourage healthy lifestyles, thereby increasing team spirit and productivity.

The Wellness Committee members covered a wide range of topics, including the nature of stress, its types, causes, and symptoms. They also informed the staff about maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Additionally, they demonstrated coping mechanisms that could enhance both personal and professional lives.

It served as a means to ease their tensions and show them that the Ministry values not only their work ethic but also their mental and emotional well-being.

From the session, staff members learned that identifying the source of their stress is the first step toward managing it. With this knowledge, they can develop strategies for managing stress and handling it constructively.

The session also encouraged staff to reflect on their perspectives on life, emphasizing the importance of giving themselves space to advance not emotionally, psychologically, and personally.

The Ministry is working towards creating a work environment that is not only safe but also healthy for everyone.

"The Wellness Committee members covered a wide range of topics, including the nature of stress, its types, causes, and symptoms."

KHOMASDAL CONSTITUENCY HOST YOUTH EXPO



Prime Minister Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila flanked by Hon. Hafeni Ndemula, Lydia Indombo and other dignitaries.

The Khomasdal Constituency hosted the Youth Expo, held on May 23, 2024, at Ramatex Otjomuise, under the theme "Empowering the Namibian Youth through Awareness, Knowledge, Engagement, and Employment Prospects."

The event brought the Vice President, Prime Minister, Deputy Minister, and Executive Director of the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, and Employment Creation, Ms. Lydia Indombo. The Expo aimed to address Namibia's pressing issue of youth unemployment by fostering a collaborative effort between government institutions and the private sector.

In her keynote speech, the Executive Director in the Ministry of Labour, Lydia Indombo highlighted several initiatives by the Ministry that aim to combat youth unemployment. She mentioned the Employment Services Act, which mandates employers to report vacancies to the Employment Services Bureau, and the Namibia Integrated Employment Information System (NIEIS). This database matches job seekers with available opportunities. "The Ministry has registered up to 200,000 jobseekers on NIEIS, with over 10,273 placements countrywide," she reported. This initiative emphasizes strategic interventions and improved accessibility to job opportunities.

"We are also developing the third National Employment Policy to ensure coordinated efforts in employment creation."

Indombo also emphasized the importance of some of the Ministry's functions, including vocational counseling services and career guidance. According to Indombo, these services aim to help individuals including the youth make informed career choices and enhance their employability. "We are also developing the Third National Employment Policy to ensure coordinated efforts in employment creation," she announced. The Policy is expected to outline strategies and programs aimed at boosting employment across various sectors, including agriculture and biomass production among others.

Indombo urged all stakeholders to engage in a "whole-of-Namibia approach" to create a resilient, inclusive, and prosperous future. Her call to action emphasised the necessity for collective involvement from government bodies, private sectors, educational institutions, and civil society to empower the youth with skills and knowledge for better employment prospects.



MLIREC HOSTS A THREE-DAY PRODUCTIVITY SESSION



Some of the staff members who participated in Productivity Sessions

The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and three-day productivity session from May 28th to 30th, 2024, for its Windhoek-based staff. The goal of the session was to improve employee performance and overall productivity by encouraging a continual process improvement approach.

The workshop educated staff on cost-cutting strategies, workplace ethics, productivity alignment, and interpersonal communication. Emphasizing best practices and service quality improvement, the session highlighted the benefits of productivity enhancement.

Productivity is viewed in society as a mind-set that strives to continuously improve current practices, with the belief that individuals can achieve more today than they did yesterday, and even more tomorrow. Attending productivity workshops is essential for employees for several reasons. These include introducing the concept of mind-set modification to assist them in refocusing their overall performance. These sessions aim to improve staff performance and service delivery within the Ministry and foster a culture of productivity in the workplace.

There are numerous ways to boost productivity at work, but each person must put in the effort to achieve this goal. Utilizing the 5 S's to maintain organization, defining priorities to avoid distractions, setting detailed daily goals, and effectively managing time are just a few strategies that can be implemented. Workers who adhere to these procedures experience increased productivity, produce higher-quality work, reduce stress levels, and achieve a healthy work-life balance.

Improving productivity is an ongoing process. By periodically evaluating and enhancing our work habits, we can become more effective and satisfied in our careers. Remain devoted, stay focused, and pursue continual development at all times.

According to Julia Hamata, Chief Development Planner in the Productivity Unit, the Productivity Team recently engaged the Management of the Ministry and also plans to have a series of Productivity sessions with the staff in the Regions.

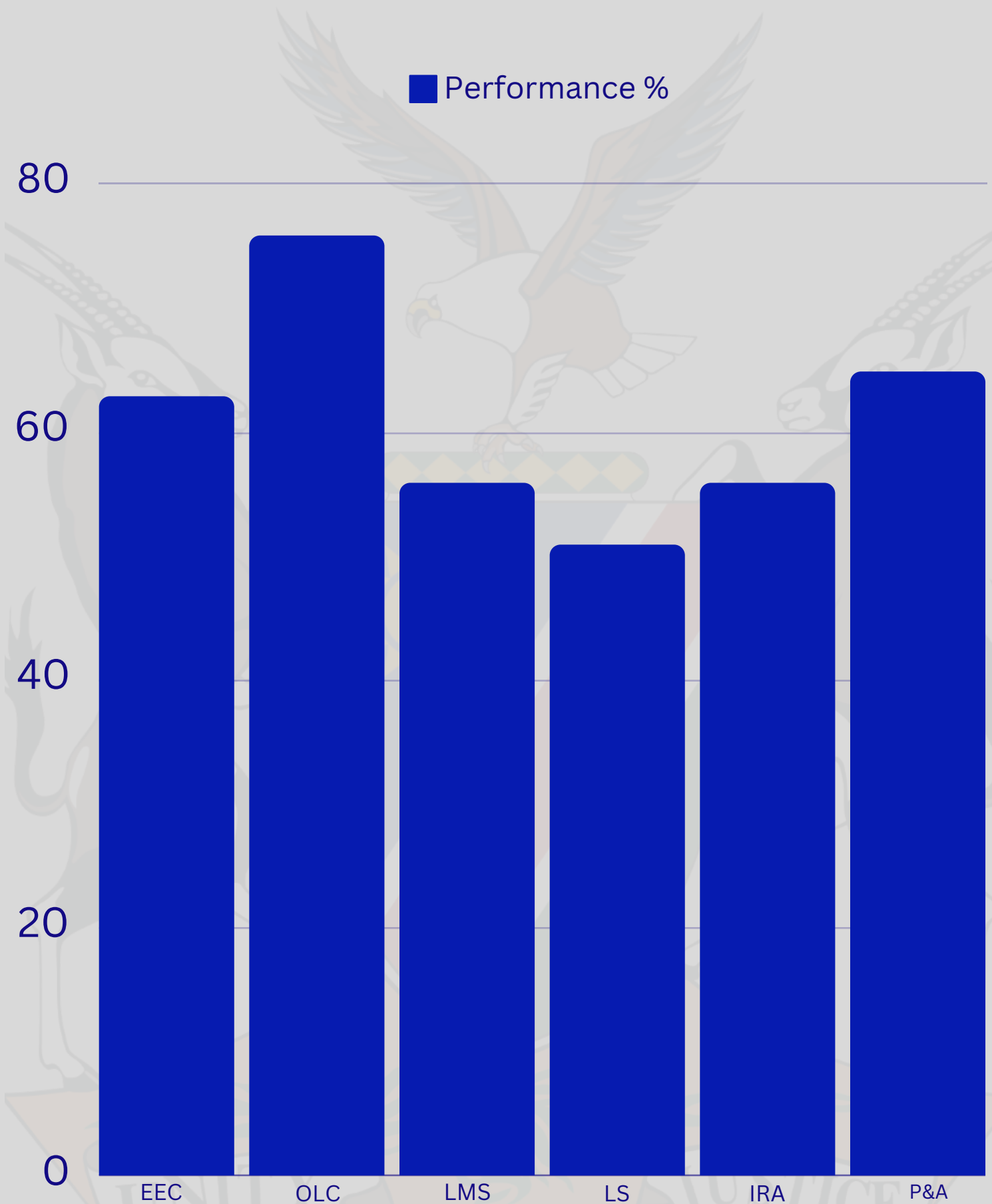


Julia Hamhata

Chief Development Planner: Productivity Unit



GAUGING ODDS' PERFORMANCE: QUARTER 4- 2023/24



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ILO CONVENTION 190

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS & EMPLOYMENT CREATION
Republic of Namibia

WHAT DOES A WORLD OF WORK FREE FROM VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT LOOK LIKE?

- Mutual Respect**
BETWEEN COLLEAGUES, EMPLOYERS, AND EMPLOYEES
- Clear Communication**
THE ABILITY TO MANAGE CONFLICT IN CONSTRUCTIVE WAYS
- Positive Behaviour**
THE ABILITY TO TAKE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR OUR ACTIONS AT ALL TIMES
- Repair Relationships**
THE ABILITY TO MEND MISCOMMUNICATION AND RESPOND TO RUPTURE IN RELATIONSHIP

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS & EMPLOYMENT CREATION
Republic of Namibia

WHAT IS VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT?

- It is a range of unacceptable behaviours & practices, or threats thereof
- It does not matter whether it is a single occurrence or a repeated occurrence

What matters is whether it aims at, results in, or is likely to result in harm

Including...

- Physical**
- Psychological**
- Sexual**
- Economic**

harm, & includes gender-based violence and harassment and bullying

Gender-based violence and harassment is directed at persons because of their sex or gender, or affecting persons of a particular sex or gender disproportionately and includes sexual harassment

CONVENTION 190 PROMISES A WORLD OF WORK FREE FROM VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

WHERE AM I PROTECTED?

C190 covers us in all places connected to work

Public or private places	Digital places you use to communicate about work	Places where you rest from work or use the bathroom	Work accommodation
Where you travel for work	Where you get trained for work	Places where you get paid for work done	Where you socialise for work
Where you socialize for work	Driving for work	Places where you rest from work or use the bathroom	At any work activities

This Convention recognizes:

- The important role of public authorities in the case of informal economy worker
- The effect of domestic violence in the world of work

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS & EMPLOYMENT CREATION
Republic of Namibia

TRUST

FOR PEOPLE TO TRUST US WE NEED 4 KEY INGREDIENTS

A ABLE to do our job well, with the needed skills, & a track record to support it	B BELIEVABLE You are honest & show integrity
C CONNECTED kind & sincere & show concern for all those you work with.	D DEPENDABLE consistent & reliable at all times

FAILING TO DO ONLY ONE OF THESE THINGS



IN LOVING MEMORIES
MS. ESMERALDA C. LINKS



*** 05 - 12- 1987**
+ 26 - 05 - 2024

STAFF APPOINTMENT



Ms. Sandra Augusto
Cleaner Head Office
(05.06.24)



Ms. Anna Dam
Cleaner
Head Office
(04.06.24)



Ms. Serah Awasman
Cleaner
Oranjemund
(07.05.24)



Mr. Kazara Ndovazu
Administrative Officer
Opuwo
(01.05.24)

Promotions within the Ministry



Ms. Kyllikki. T.N. Sihlahla
Labour Commissioner
(01.06.24)

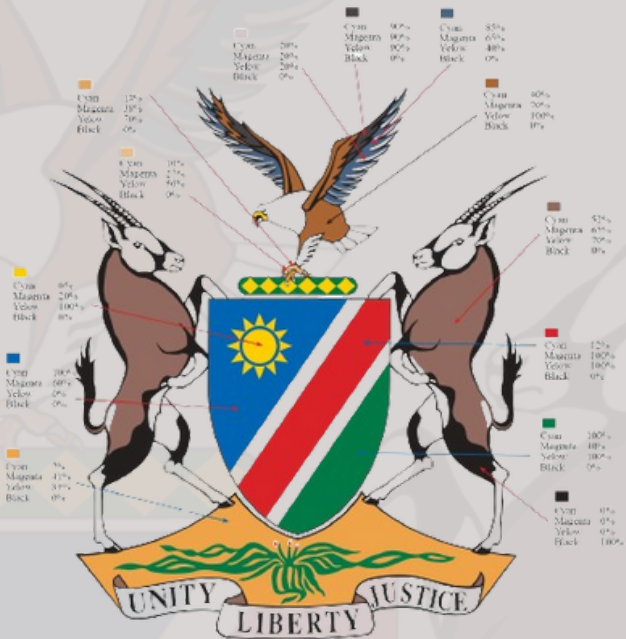


Mr. Eliakim. E. Nashiku
Control Labour Inspector
(01.06.24)



Ms. Uarongera Ngarangombe
Control Labour Inspector
(01.06.24)

MAKE USE OF THE CORRECT COAT OF ARMS



NB: Get the correct Coat of Arms from the Public Relations Office.



MLIREC HIGH LEVEL STATEMENTS

MANDATE



To coordinate employment creation efforts, to regulate the labour market in accordance with the Namibian Constitution, and the labour and employment laws.



VISION

A productive nation enjoying harmonious industrial relations, decent work, social protection and full employment.

MISSION



To achieve harmonious labour relations, full and productive employment and social justice at work through social dialogue, public education, labour market services, law enforcement and dispute resolution.

CORE VALUES



Standard
information
Courtesy and Helpfulness
Consultation and Participation
Accountability
Transparency
Non-discrimination
Quality Services
Value for Money
Accessibility