

MEDIA STATEMENT



Bank of Namibia

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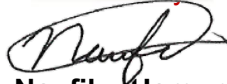
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BANK OF NAMIBIA RECOGNISED FOR INSTITUTIONAL AND TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP IN GLOBAL FINANCIAL INCLUSION

1. The Bank of Namibia has received the 2026 Institutional Leadership Award from the Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI), while Mrs Sesilia Nekwaya-Okafor, Principal Economist at the Bank, received the 2026 Technical Leadership Award for the Financial Inclusion Data and Impact Working Group (FIDIWG). The awards were presented during the 2026 AFI Global Policy Forum held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.
2. The Institutional Leadership Award is presented to an AFI member institution that demonstrates strong leadership within the network through active engagement, technical contributions to financial inclusion, thought leadership and representation of the AFI network at global platforms. The recognition, therefore, reflects the Bank of Namibia's sustained contribution to financial inclusion policy development, peer learning and knowledge exchange at both national and international levels. The Bank's Institutional Leadership Award was received by Deputy Governor of the Bank of Namibia, Ms. Leonie Dunn, who also serves on the AFI Board of Directors, contributing to the strategic direction and governance of the global network.
3. Complementing the Bank's institutional recognition, Mrs Nekwaya- Okafor received the Technical Leadership Award in recognition of her contribution to FIDIWG, where she serves as Co-Chair and Gender Focal Point Lead. AFI's Technical Leadership Awards recognise individuals from member institutions who demonstrate outstanding technical leadership and contribute high-quality technical inputs to the work and outputs of AFI's Working Groups.
4. AFI is a member-owned global network of central banks, financial regulators and policymakers from emerging and developing economies that works to advance practical policy solutions for financial inclusion. The Bank of Namibia has been a principal member of AFI since 2009 and participates actively in the network's technical and policy platforms.

5. Namibia's relationship with the network was further strengthened in 2025 when the Bank of Namibia co-hosted the AFI Global Policy Forum in Swakopmund. The Forum brought together more than 700 policymakers, regulators and financial sector stakeholders representing 71 AFI member institutions from 61 countries. The gathering culminated in the Swakopmund Call to Action, which urged policymakers to move beyond financial access to financial inclusion that delivers meaningful and equitable outcomes.
6. Speaking during a celebratory engagement with the Bank's AFI delegation following their return from Papua New Guinea, Governor of the Bank of Namibia, Mr. Ebson Uanguta, welcomed the recognition of both the institution and its staff. He noted that, "As a knowledge-based institution, we take particular pride in seeing both the Bank and our people recognised globally. Recognition of one of our own on a global platform is also recognition of the calibre of people we have within the Bank. These awards affirm that Namibia is not only participating in international policy discussions, but is contributing knowledge, experience and practical solutions that can help shape the financial inclusion agenda. When our employees represent the Bank internationally, they carry not only the name of this institution, but that of Namibia, and it is important that they continue to do so with distinction."
7. The Governor further congratulated the Bank's broader AFI team for their continued engagement across the network and encouraged staff to continue using international platforms not only to learn from their peers, but also to contribute Namibia's experiences and technical knowledge to global policy discussions. The two awards build on the Bank's longstanding engagement with AFI and reinforce its commitment to advancing an inclusive, resilient and responsive financial system that contributes meaningfully to Namibia's broader economic development.

Issued by:



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