

UNAM completes double deal – linking academia and industry

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In a landmark decision, the University of Namibia (UNAM) recently inked not 1 but 2 Memorandums of Understanding (MoU's), forging an essential alliance with NOVANAM and Millennium Refrigeration & Electrical Services (MR&ES) on work-integrated education.

The signing ceremony, graced by the respective heads of UNAM, NOVANAM, and MR&ES, marked a pivotal moment for higher education. With a focus on practical attachments for UNAM students, these agreements promise to bridge the gap between classroom theory and real-world application.



Prof K Matengu, UNAM Vice Chancellor, flanked by the MD of NOVANAM, Mr Edwin Kamatoto, on his left, and the MD of MR&ES, Mr Parastus Nepolo, on his right.

Professor Kenneth Matengu, UNAM Vice Chancellor, emphasised the cooperative relationship between academia and industry. “Qualifications alone do not suffice,” he explained, highlighting the crucial role of workplace experience in shaping competent professionals. Expressing gratitude to the partnering institutions, he subsequently thanked the respective institution heads, for choosing UNAM as their partner of choice.

For NOVANAM, represented by Managing Director, Mr. Edwin Kamatoto, this collaboration signifies a commitment to nurturing the leaders and innovators of tomorrow. “Our youth hold the key to driving the nation’s economy forward,” Mr. Kamatoto explained, underlining the importance of investing in future talent.

The Managing Director of MR&ES, Mr. Paratus Nepolo, stressed that it is important for industries to enhance their corporate social responsibility towards internship programmes, and he challenged other organisations to come on board and provide attachment platforms to more students.

During the signing ceremony, Prof Ndeapo Nickanor, the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Engineering and Natural Sciences, welcomed the partnership and highlighted that, “it came at an opportune time, to meet the mandatory demands of a transformed curriculum, that tries as much as possible to expose students to real-world contexts in their learning environment.”

The fruits of these partnerships are already evident with a combined total of 28 students from engineering, food sciences, and fishery sciences benefiting from placements at NOVANAM and MR&ES. Prof. Matengu extended his appreciation to all parties involved in the agreements, singling out UNAM's Industry & Cooperative Education unit for their pivotal role in facilitating these partnerships.

As the ink dries on these MoU's, Prof. Matengu reassured NOVANAM and MR&ES of UNAM's unwavering commitment to fostering this alliance. He stated that this partnership will be nurtured to maintain a sustainable long-term pursuit of a highly skilled workforce for this country and beyond.