



# PREMIER NEWS

The Office of the Prime Minister's official e-newsletter, May- July 2021, Vol. 4 | Issue No. 1

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## From the Desk of the ED



**Mr. I-Ben Natangwe Nashandi**  
Executive Director

Time and again we are being reminded that life doesn't stop due to challenges in life. Hence, the saying "life goes on".

Indeed it has been proven again that during this pandemic that as we battle the invisible virus that is posing a challenge globally; human life, activities and their quest for survival continues, *albeit*, with some limitations.

It is the spirit we should continue to feed to be resilient, courageous and continue serving Namibia. In an effort to strengthen systems in serving Namibia, the Office of the Prime Minister is hard at work to review its Performance Management System (PMS), to ensure that service delivery is not only fast-tracked but ongoing and automated.

In this regard, we have hired high-end EU experts, who conducted numerous workshops, conferences and trainings for change agents, managers, regional councils. I am glad to say PMS review is progressing well and I am excited about progress made so far.

Let me use this opportunity to remind you that Namibia has detected a vicious variant of Covid-19 known as the Delta variant. Let us all play a role in improving and maintaining organisational safety for all of us. A healthy nation is a productive one.

Together we can beat Covid-19 and flatten the curve. My condolences to the family, friends and colleagues for the loss of our departed colleagues and all bereaving Namibians.

## PREMIER NEWS

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## Editor's Note



**Rhingo Mutambo (CPRP)**  
Chief Public Relations Officer

Hello family!. Welcome to Volume 4, Issue 1 of the electronic newsletter of the *Premier News*- the official quartetly e-newsletter of the Office of the Prime Minister.

In this edition, we look at the commissioning of new covid-19 field hospitals in Namibia, various trainings, workshops, conferences and consultations undertaken as Namibia reviews its current Public Management System (PMS) Policy.

Another prominent issue featured in this edition is the Report on the conclusion of the negotiations on genocide, apology and reparations between Germany and Namibia.

We also bring you the views of the OPM Student Interns on working in the public service and organisational communication as well various information on the Prime Minister's engagements, Covid-19 vaccination and media freedom day.

Finally, let me encourage you with with this; *"many will pass on, but the human race will survice Covid-19"*. Let us demonstrate bravery, as brave people from the land of the brave.

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# PM Commissions new field hospital for Covid-19 patients

Anna-liisa Muleka and Jakapita kandanga



Prime Minister, Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila (second from left) flanked by Hon. Dr. Kalumbi Shangula, Minister of Health and Social Welfare (Second from right), NCCI President, Mr. Bisey Uirab (left) and Mr. Marco Wenk, Managing Director-Namibia Breweries Limited (right), during the commissioning of a private sector sponsored field bed hospital for Covid-19 patients at the Katutura Intermediate Hospital in Windhoek, on 29 July 2021.

Prime Minister, Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila commissioned a private sector sponsored 70 field bed hospital for Covid-19 patients at the Katutura Intermediate Hospital in Windhoek, on 29 July 2021.

Currently, there are 1 732 isolation beds country wide in the public and private sector of which 134 are Intensive Care Unit beds.

Dr. Nelago Amagulu, Medical Superintendent at the Katutura Intermediate Hospital said there were also efforts underway to convert medical wards and a hall at the hospital to provide for about 46 more beds for covid patients.

The Prime Minister noted that it is pleasing that this particular facility is borne out of a collaboration between the Government and private sector under the umbrella of the Namibian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Commending the private sector for support, the Prime Minister

said, the operation of this field hospital is greatly welcomed as Namibia's health care systems feels the pressure from increased demand for services due to Covid-19.

Apart from the commissioned 70 field bed hospital for Covid-19 patients, Namibia is developing and upgrading other Covid facilities across the country which includes Katutura TB wards Extension, Oshakati Field Hospital/Tent and Construction of prefabricated isolation facilities.

The Prime Minister says, "most of these facilities are envisaged to be completed between August and October 2021."

Additionally, there has been an increase in the intake of Covid-19 vaccination and the government continues to pursue efforts to secure more doses of vaccines for Namibia.

The facility was established by the private sector under the umbrella of the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI).





# PMS Policy undergoes review - Envisioning an automated and integrated PMS

Rhingo Mutambo



**The Public Service Performance Management System (PMS) is undergoing a multi-layered review and this time around it is expected to be more integrated and automated. The EU funded review emanated from a report recommendations by a consultant recruited by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).**

A Performance Management System was conceived and adopted by the Public Service of Namibia following approval by Cabinet in August 2011. Since then, the PMS was formalised as a business process for competency in the Public Service.

Although the PMS was designed as a strategic operational tool for managing organisational, individual and team performance to realise organisational goals, and a primary vehicle for implementing government initiatives, the government deemed it necessary to review the PMS processes with a view to enhance accountability and improving the performance culture in the Public Service.

Furthermore, the report expressed the need to integrate the Performance Management Framework (PMF) of both public servants and Public Office Bearers (POBs) since the current PMS is applicable to all public servants employed under the Public Service Act, 1995 (No.13 of 1995) and staff members appointed in terms of the Regional Councils Act, 1992 (No. 22 of 1992).

PMS has been applied in Namibia since 2005 for public servants and 2015-2020 for POBs. However, anecdotal evidence from interviews conducted with senior government officers in 2020, reveal a disconnect between the two levels of policy namely POBs and public servants particularly in the strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes.

The same report also revealed that Local Authorities (LAs) and Public Enterprises (PEs) do not prescribe to Public Service PMS despite these institutions being part of the category "*democratic institutions of the State*", responsible for execution of public policies, programs and projects.

The UNECA sponsored report recommended one overarching PMS for all these institutions.

Other recommendations identified by the same report were to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework administered by an independent unit, establish a unit/office to manage the Public Office Bearers' (POBS) performance, and establish a performance incentive regime for the bureaucrats.

In 2015, the government invited UNECA to assist in the designing and rolling out performance contracts between the President of Namibia and Cabinet Ministers to ensure effective and efficient service delivery, and improve the livelihood of the people of Namibia.

Against this background, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) required further assistance for the programming of the implementation of UNECA recommendations including technical support towards reviewing the PMS policy, automation and integrating the PMS for public servants with that of POBs into one Integrated Performance Management System Framework (IPMSF).

Pursuant to the extended Terms of Reference (TOR), a consultative workshop took place on 12 & 14 April 2021 at Safari Hotel and Casino in Windhoek Namibia to review, verify and validate the accuracy of the report content on the proposed IPMSF. The workshop was attended by representatives from OMAs, Regional Councils, and Association of Local Authorities in Namibia, Association of Regional Councils, City of Windhoek, NUST, IUM, UNAM and NIPAM.

The review is funded by the European Union (EU).

# Communication in the workplace during COVID-19

*Jakapita Kandanga*



*Jakapita Kandanga*

For many of us who work as public servants, our workplaces have turned into our second homes as we spent roughly 9 hours of our day in our offices. It is in this time that we rely on one another to effectively perform the best at our jobs.

Upon my arrival at the Office of the Prime Minister, I realised that the organisational communication is important. However, often time staff members work in silos, everyone for themselves and God for us all and most times communication only goes as far as a “good morning at the beginning of the day and a “Good day” by the end of the day.

One of the key contributing factors to this lack of communication is the Covid-9 pandemic. Due the social distance requirements of the covid-19 pandemic people have also started growing socially distant and this is putting a strain on the working environment of many organisations.

However, it shouldn't be the reason why the communication and interaction at work should fail. Effective communication in the workplace is a crucial part of the office or company's success as it eliminates unnecessary conflicts and boost performance while simultaneously building a stronger work teams.

There are many ways in which one can still have a respectful interaction in the workplace and practice

effective communication for example, showing an interest in other people's perspective or work.

Another is one is something called mirror neurons. Mirror neurons can loosely be defined as learning through observing others. According to science, as this help us understand others by providing an inner imitation of other people's activities, which enables us to “stimulate” the intents and feelings connected with those behaviors. We can better understand the motivations of the people we work with if consider their point of view.

Look for opportunities to grow, stretch and learn. We have a tendency to believe that our point of view is true since it is all we have ever known. However, there are numerous sources of knowledge available in the workplace, and all we need to do is take the time to investigate them. Learn more about that new coworker or meet up with someone from another department for lunch and you will be surprised by what you can learn from them.

Seek out opportunities to interact with people and lend a hand. When we communicate with coworkers, it's easier to overcome our differences by first finding methods to connect. Does that coworker who holds opposing views appreciate family as much as you do? The latter permits you to form a bond with the person based on shared interests. Allow yourself to be wrong every now and then.

We often restrict the amount of new knowledge we take in when we already assume we are correct, because we already know everything! Accepting that you may not always be correct and allowing yourself to learn from your coworkers' differences through interactional is always beneficial.

Engage people in activities that will increase their self-esteem. People flinging personal insults at one another during discussions of difference or diversity in the workplace can grow unpleasant. Instead, when discussing contentious issues, strive to improve the self-esteem of others. Self-esteem is a crucial component of creating a respectful workplace, build trust and improve good communication.

Effective communication in the office is vital since every administrative function and activity involves some form of direct and indirect communication (verbal and nonverbal).



## “Namibian Govt. door remains open for genocide talks”, says PM

Anna-liisa Muleka and Jakapita Kandanga

Prime Minister Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, says although negotiations on genocide, apology and reparation between the Namibian Government and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has been concluded, the door of the Namibian Government remains open.

The Prime Minister made these remarks when she briefed the Namibian Parliament on the conclusion of the negotiations on genocide, apology and Reparations, on 08 June 2021.

She further urged all stakeholder to treat and accord this matter the sensitivity it deserves, proceed together in unity and speak with one voice, in the best interests of the affected communities and the Namibian nation at large, until the matter is concluded.

The final talks of the negotiations on genocide, apology and reparations between the Republic of Namibia and the federal Republic of Germany was concluded on 15 May 2021.

These negotiations started after a unanimously National Assembly Motion on the genocide which as passed in 2006. The 2006 National Assembly Motion stated that Germany should acknowledge that she has committed genocide in Namibia during the period 1904-1908, render an unconditional apology to Namibia for the genocide and pay reparations.

The Prime Minister informed the August House that as an outcome of the negotiations, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany made available the amount of 1100 (One



billion and one hundred Million) Euros to be allocated for reconciliation and reconstruction programmes over a period of 30 (thirty) years.

Namibia and Germany further agreed on a Joint Declaration a framework which will guide the process of acknowledgement of genocide; rendering of an apology and the payments of reparations by the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as the future relations between the two countries.

She also informed the House that the German President was prepared to travel to Namibia to render an “unconditional apology to the affected communities” in the National Assembly of Namibia, on a date to be agreed upon between the two (2) Governments.

The Prime Minister said the Declaration will be signed by the foreign Ministers of Namibia and Germany respectively.

Once, signed, the Joint Declaration will be brought to the Namibian Parliament for consideration and ratification, as it is practice under the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia.

Moreover, the Joint Declaration stipulates that the bilateral relations between the two countries will no longer be at the same level, but would be elevated to the highest level through the Bi-National Commission these new enhanced relations between the two countries will enable Namibia to optimize opportunities that is expected to benefit the people of Namibia in the future.

A Bi-National Commission is a unique forum established by two countries to allow for regular exchanges at the cabinet-level on a wide range of issues critical bilateral relations.

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*‘The door of the Namibian Government remains open for Genocide talks’*

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# Working in Government: A personal Introspection

Anna-liisa Muleka



Anna-liisa Muleka

When young people think of working for the government they do not seem very pleased by the idea. They imagine dealing with grumpy politicians, boring work environment with depressing long lonely hours.

Hence, the idea of having an 8 to 5 public service job becomes gloomy. What if I told it is not what it looks like, perhaps working for the government can be exciting and challenging but it's worth it.

Well, it may not be paradise but it certainly will offer you a sense of security and flexibility. Imagine yourself starting off right from university as an office administrator or a personal assistant to an executive director in a Ministry or a big parastatal, while at same time gaining experience and hopefully one day becoming a prominent politician a minister or a veteran public servant.

Yes! That dream can become a reality.

Here are a few reasons why I think you should kick start your career as a government official. I have discovered that working for the government offers one an increased job security, in times of uncertainty (e.g. Covid -19) one thing for sure is that your government job will not disappoint you.

Government employment offers great salary benefits with so many other benefits such as medical aid, housing allowance and transport allowance, sounds like a luxury one might enjoy getting all the good things in life at your feet.

Becoming a government official offers one flexibility, which means you will have extra time for your hobbies or further your studies while having a secured job. One thing for certain is having long leaves which gives you an opportunity to travel at the same time explore new adventures. The government takes care of your well-being making sure that when you retire one takes a generous package of a pension retirement.

Public service employment can be challenging, interesting and offers one ground breaking opportunities which cultivates professional development and advancement opportunities.

It creates an opportunity for young people to meaningfully contribute within their society to impact the greater good of their country. Being young means one is dynamic, energetic and innovative, they can initiate new ways of doing things around the office environment to contribute to efficiency and productivity.

Young people should give themselves a chance to explore what the Namibian government has in store for them. All they need is confidence and determination to succeed.

## OPM initiates “Warm Hearts for Warm Bodies” Winter Campaign

Two student interns from the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) initiated a “*Warm Hearts for Warm Bodies*” Winter Campaign which commenced on 07 June 2021.

“We were privileged to have been given an opportunity to initiate this Campaign and to have our idea embraced by the Prime Minister and the Executive Director in OPM,” says Jakapita Kandanga and Anna-liisa Muleka. The winter campaign aims to provide basic essential needs to new mothers and their new born babies who are unable to care for themselves during this cold season to fend off high chances of Covid-19 infections.

These basic essential needs will come through the form of donations, which simultaneously gives OPM staff members an opportunity to donate new or reusable old items such as; blankets, old clothes, diapers, baby bottles, slippers, socks, sleeping gowns, hot water bottles etc. The donations slated to be handed over by the end of July 2021 is expected to be done by the Prime Minister, Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila to selected mothers and their new born babies as beneficiaries at the Katutura State Hospital in Windhoek.

The Winter Campaign is being championed by the Public Relations Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister with the idea to roll-out this pilot initiative to the public in the future and make it an annual event on the Prime Minister's year calendar.



## OPM grieving over departed colleagues

Dr. Samuel Chief Ankama who was a former Deputy Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister died on 4 July 2021. Dr. Ankama served our country in different capacities, having worked as an educator, freedom fighter Public Office Bearer with his last appointment at OPM from 2018 -21 March 2021. “He will be remembered for his highest level of commitment, dedication and professionalism,” said Prime Minister, Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila in her message of condolences to his family on 05 July 2021.



Dr. Samuel Chief Ankama



Ms. Ella Bacela

Ms. Ella Bacela died on 22 June 2021 at Katutura State Hospital in Windhoek, due to Covid-19 related complications. She has served as a record keeping personnel, Main Records Centre at the Office of the Prime Minister's Head Office, from 01 August 2001- first as Registry Clerk and after successive regrading as an Administrative Officer -a position which she held until her untimely passing on. We have lost a true, committed and veteran archivist.

Ms. Selma Shapanga died on 04 July 2021, due to Covid-19 related complications.

She has served as a Senior Administrative Officer, Grade 10, at the Office of the Prime Minister's Procurement Sub-Division, from 01 August 2016. Ms. Shapanga previously worked as Administrative Officer, Grade 12, at Anti-corruption Commission (ACC), before joining the Office of the Prime Minister.



Ms. Selma Shapanga

On behalf of the Right Honourable Prime Minister, the Secretary to Cabinet, OPM Management and staff members, we wish to extend our heartfelt condolences to her family, friends and colleagues. We have lost a dedicated and a humble public servant.

## Office engagements at a glance!

The Office of the Prime Minister received a donation of N\$ 15 million on 21 June 2021 from ReconAfrica towards government vaccination efforts, in response to a call for more corporate support in the fight against Covid-19 by the Prime Minister Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila. Seen in the Picture is Mr. Shakwa Nyambe, ReconAfrica Lawyer and Mr. Robert Mwanachilenga, ReconAfrica Project Manager.



Chief Rev. Ananias Soroseb & delegation from the Hai//om San Royal Leadership of Kallakhoesan Traditional Authority paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister, Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila on 28 May 2021 to discuss socio-economic challenges that they have been facing as a community.

Managers in the Public Service attended the Change Management workshop at Arebbush in Windhoek organised by the Office of the Prime Minister, on 12 May 2021. The training was part of the EU funded Performance Management System (PMS) Policy review which was launched on 16 February 2021. The workshop was facilitated by EU Senior Expert Mrs. Ghita Benkirane (Seated: 2nd from left).



Executive Directors in the Public Service attended the Change Management workshop at Arebbush in Windhoek organised by the Office of the Prime Minister, on 11 May 2021. The training was part of the EU funded Performance Management System (PMS) Policy review which was launched on 16 February 2021. The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Arthur Delabie (Centre).



# OPM certifies PMS Change Agents

Rhingo Mutambo



*Change Agents posing for a group picture with Deputy Executive Director, Department for Public Service Management, Ms. Tuyakula Haipinge (FR: centre) and EU Senior Expert Mrs. Ghita Benkirane (FR: 2nd from Right).*

**About 24 staff members consisting of Learning and Development Officers and some key staff members from OPM and NIPAM were recently certified as Change Agents to improve service delivery by changing the mindset of other staff members and inspiring positive vibration in the Public Service.**

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) with assistance from the European Union (EU) sponsored the five (5) days' training workshop on Change Management Training held at the Namibia Institute for Public Administration and Management (NIPAM) and Arrebbush from 28 April to 10 May 2021.

Officiating at the Change Management certification ceremony, the Deputy Executive Director heading the Department for Public Service Management, Ms. Tuyakula Haipinge said; "participants should consider themselves lucky to have attended this unique and first of its kind training".

The training was part of the EU funded Performance Management System (PMS) Policy review which was launched on 16 February 2021. The EU has embarked on the PMS review project to assist the Namibian Government in the enhancement of the PMS roll out in the Public Service, *inter-alia*, covering Change Management,

Performance Management, Communication and System Automation, Knowledge Management and Business Process Management.

The training conducted by an EU Senior Expert Mrs. Ghita Benkirane, focused on change management process, collective intelligence and decision making, cognitive bias in personnel appraisal, coaching techniques to implement change, and change communication.

Some of the specific objectives are to review PMS Policy (2011), integrate the revised PMS Policy with both the public servants (staff members) and the Public Office Bearers (Ministers and Deputy Ministers), review the Staff Rule on PMS, review PMS Monitoring & Evaluation and reporting tools.

Further training on Change Management and leadership were also conducted for the benefit of Executive Directors, Managers and Chief Regional Officers.

# Who should be vaccinated?

*Ms. Anna-Iissa Muleka and Jakapita Kandang*

There is an enormous confusion and misconceptions pertaining to who should be vaccinated against Covid-19. Recently, the Ministry of Health and Social Services issued a guide to its key health stakeholders. The *Premier News* found this information helpful to clear the minds of our audience, avert further uncertainties and encourage more people to get vaccinated.

The following guidelines should be followed pertaining to vaccination of certain population groups:

- Persons with COVID-19 infection should not be vaccinated until they have recovered from acute illness (at least 14 days after de-isolation).
- Co-administration of an influenza vaccine with a COVID-19 vaccine on the same day is not recommended.
- Neither Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) nor Antigen diagnostic tests can produce a positive result due to vaccination. This is because these PCR tests check for active disease and not whether an individual is immune or not.

A PCR test is performed to detect the presence of a virus if you are infected at the time of the test. The test also detects residues of virus even after you are no longer infected.

- Persons living with HIV/AIDS are at a higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease and may be vaccinated given that both vaccines (Sinopharm & AstraZeneca) are non-replicating.
- Persons whose immune systems are weak are at a higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease and may be vaccinated given that both vaccines (Sinopharm & AstraZeneca) are non-replicating.



- Persons with comorbidities such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease and diabetes are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease and vaccination is recommended, however, with caution.
- Pregnant women can receive vaccine if the benefit of the vaccination to the pregnant women outweighs the potential vaccine risk.
- Lactating or breastfeeding mothers maybe vaccinated since vaccines are non-replicating and is unlikely to pose a risk to a breastfeeding child.
- Persons younger than 18 years of age should NOT be vaccinated (for now) due to current unavailability of data.
- All persons older than 60 years of age are at higher risk of COVID-19 severe disease and death, and should be offered vaccination.

## Vaccination Centre in Windhoek

1. Katutura Intermediate State Hospital
2. Windhoek Central Hospital
3. Rhino Park Private Hospital
4. Lady Pohamba Private Hospital

**Source:** Ministry of Health and Social Services





**WHEN  
JOURNALISTS  
CAN'T ASK  
WE CAN'T ACT**

#QuestionsThatMatter

## Land of the Brave Hosts Word Press Freedom Day

*Ms. Anna-lissa Muleka and Jakapita Kandanga*

The World Press Freedom Day is a highly anticipated global event that gained recognition by the UN National Assembly in May 1993.

The purpose of this event serves a platform that provides media professionals, civil society representatives and academics an opportunity to discuss challenges that hinders press emancipation and the safety of journalists.

This year the Global Conference event hosted by the Namibian Government in partnership with UNESCO took place in Windhoek from the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - 3 May 2021 under the theme: *'Information as a Public Good'*.

This particular event encourages media professionals to reflect on key fundamental issues which pertains to issues of press freedom and professional ethics. In various countries across the globe, journalists and media persons have encountered harassment, detention and in worst cases even death for simply executing their jobs.

This event is dedicated to showing solidarity towards journalists and all media practitioners. Since independence the Namibian government advocates

for freedom of speech and expression for all individuals, including media professionals.

During the speech delivered at the main event, by Prime Minister Saara Kuugongelwa – Amadhila said that “The rights and freedoms of the citizens and residents of Namibia are guaranteed in the Constitution which entrenches a bill of rights encompassing the freedom of the press and other media.”

Over the past 3 decades, the Namibian Government has not had any reported cases of media professionals or journalists having been assaulted, killed or arrested for performing their duties.

The government has put measures in place to encourage the media to use its media freedom power conscientiously in support of government initiatives to improve the living conditions of the nation.

Freedom of the press lures governments to greater prosperity and fosters efforts to accelerate socio-economic growth. It is thus imperative that the media is granted an opportunity to play its role effectively to maximise efficiency in delivering timely information without fear or intimidation.



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