



Government Information

# Bulletin

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## Government assesses technology penetration in rural areas

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# From the desk of the Minister



**Hon. Stanley Simataa**  
MICT Minister

As is the norm, every quarter we highlight some of the activities undertaken by various government institutions as they actively seek to bring much needed services closer to the people.

This edition of the Government Information Bulletin presents a variety of articles that speak to the various activities undertaken by institutions during the 3rd quarter of the 2019/2020 financial year. We bring you a mix of stories that you will find informative.

As government we envision a nation made up of people who are ICT smart and innovative, a people who also strive to be self-sufficient. It is therefore in the country's best interest to ensure that policies and programmes create an enabling environment.

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) conducted an assessment on the penetration of technology in rural areas by working with the Rural Women Parliament with Male as Partners in Windhoek. The assessment was meant to identify the need for information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as the internet

accessibility and usage, use of different gadgets, emails and social media within rural communities. It is my belief that this assessment will motivate us to better serve the people.

Another story that you will find interesting is one that speaks on e-waste (page 8). We live in an ever-evolving world that constantly introduces new technology and improvements to existing technology. So this leads to ask, **what happens to the old and possibly broken technological equipment?**

An unknown author once wrote: "If it has a plug or runs on batteries and it is broken – it's e-waste". As the market continues to expand and innovation cycles become even shorter, the replacement of equipment accelerates – making more Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE), a fast-growing source of waste – in fact, many classify it as the fastest growing waste stream globally.

It has been found that discarding old and broken equipment as household rubbish bins and landfills, is an exercise that has huge implications to the environment. As part of our commitment to ensuring a pollution free environment, the ministry is involved in drafting the E-waste Management Policy. It is our hope that this policy once adopted will bring clarity and understanding on E-waste and management thereof. In the meantime it is my plea that we discard our old equipment in an environmental friendly manner.

There are many other stories to find in this edition.

We wish you God's blessings as you sit down to read this copy of Government Information Bulletin

Be blessed!

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## Government Information Bulletin: Publicising Government

The Government Information Bulletin was established through Cabinet decision number 13th/04.07.06/006 as an official information bulletin to publicise the Government's programmes, policies and activities for the benefit of Government institutions and the Namibian public. All the Government institutions contribute toward the Bulletin.

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To meet the specific information needs of the communities, the public is invited to send comments and suggestions on Government projects, programmes and policies, which will then be covered in the bulletin. More Government news and information can be accessed on the GRN news button on the Government internet site at

[www.grnnet.gov.na](http://www.grnnet.gov.na)

The Bulletin is distributed free to rural communities through the Ministry's regional offices. The public and organisations are welcome to subscribe to the Bulletin, but mailing costs will be for the account of the subscriber.



# Government assesses technology penetration in rural areas



*The Rural Women Parliament with male as partners provides local perspective on how to maintain better understanding, access and usage of Information and Communication Technology at the rural community level.*

**■ Story & Photo By: David Adetona**

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) conducted an assessment on the penetration of technology in rural areas by working with the Rural Women Parliament with Male as Partners in Windhoek. The assessment was meant to identify the need for information and communication technologies

(ICTs) such as the internet accessibility and usage, use of different gadgets, emails and social media within rural communities. The assessment, which was done as per the request of the National Council, was spearheaded by MICT's directorate of Audio Visual Media and Regional Offices Director, Roselia Penda. Ministry officials

interviewed members of the Rural Women Parliament with Male Partners via set questionnaires that would be interpreted to draft the needs assessment report.

Penda said that the assessment report would detail the use and need of ICTs in rural communities and how the training of community members on the use of technol-



ogy could assist in empowering them and improving their quality of life. “The MICT included the assessment as a target activity for Ministerial 2019/20 annual plan implementation of the overall outcome of the Information and Communication Technology training to be conducted eventually. Therefore, the honourables are to provide information by completing an attendance register that will be developed into a skills profile for the participants, whilst the completed training needs questionnaire will be analysed to identify and assist in creating a customised participants’ need-based course and scheduling of training sessions, as well as identification of training partners and sponsors,” she explained.

On the reasons for the assessment, the Director said that it was endorsement by the report of the Second Session of the fourth Rural Women Parliament with Male as Partners that was instituted and founded from the recommendation of the report of the Standing Committee on Gender, Youth and Information and Communication Technology.

It (assessment) was delineated and underscored from the Resolution of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), after the National Council of Namibia attendance of the 62nd United Nations Session of the CSW in New York. “This assessment will supplement the 2011 resolution of the Status of Women, which recommended governments and parliament to involve women in social activities (at grassroots’ level) with the aim of empowering them to be-

come community leaders,” the Director added.

The purpose of the Rural Women Parliament with Male Partners is to create a forum that offers opportunities to women and men at rural community level to access information on socio-economic and political developments within the country and to exchange experiences on how to deal with the challenges in their respective communities.

Penda further said the assessment was vital because the Africa Union (AU) in 2009 declared 2010 to 2020 a Women’s Decade with special focus on 10 themes that include working towards achieving the education of women in the area of Information and Communication Technology in Africa.

The Rural Women Parliament with Male Partners is made of two women and one man from each region in the country. Its mission is to create a platform to discuss issues affecting mostly women and men in rural communities and for the regional representative members to understand parliamentary processes and practices for the implementation of AU and UN declarations. Many of these parliamentarians acknowledged the value of the MICT’s assessment and open-talk discussion on ICTs, which they said would contribute to the promotion and development of rural communities.

They highlighted that assessing, training and holding open-talk sessions would expose, expand and orient the needs, features and importance of the usage or access to

Information and Communication Technologies in a sustainable manner in the country.

The parliamentarians also pointed out that the government, community leaders, non-governmental organisations as well as private and public sectors should continue to support training, creating awareness through campaign workshops, seminars, conferences and expos to educate and inform the public about various forms, usage and importance of ICTs.



*Information and Communication Technology Minister, Stanley Simataa, at a media briefing on Cabinet resolutions on 3 October 2019.*



# Govt turns to hydroponic fodder production to address drought

**Photo By: Petrus Katonyala**

**By: Memory Mutenda**

Government earmarked 30% of the land at all the Green Scheme Irrigation Projects in the country to be utilised for hydroponic fodder production as part of the drought resilience measures. An amount of N\$33 million will be made available to the Agricultural Business Development Agency (AGRIBUSDEV) under the Disaster Risk Management Fund for the production of fodder at the various Green Scheme Irrigation Projects.

An amount of N\$10 million from the N\$33 million was advanced to AGRIBUSDEV in September to guarantee fodder production and ensure uninterrupted supply during the drought period. Hydroponic is a new method of growing plants that can produce fodder within a period of 5-7 days.

Cabinet supported the introduction and promotion of non-merchandised hydroponic system to be introduced at small-scale farmers' level to allow farmers to participate in the fodder production scheme. This was announced by the Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Stanley Simataa, at a media briefing on Cabinet resolutions on 3 October 2019. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry was directed by Cab-

inet to conduct further research on other alternative production of livestock supplements, including hydroponic fodder production and bush-to-feed or biomass as well as to make recommendations to Cabinet.

In her motivation to extend the State of Emergency on accounts of the drought in parliament, Prime Minister Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, said the shortage of local supply of fodder and other animal feeds pose a risk to the sustainability of the livestock support programme.

She said government has approved an introduction of a subsidy scheme of 50% to enable small-scale farmers in various parts of the country to engage in fodder production through the use of the hydroponic method of growing crops, cover costs for the installation of hydroponic facility and purchase of seeds such as barley, maize, sorghum and wheat, as well as to offer training to farmers to venture into hydroponic fodder production.

According to the report released by Namibia Early Warning and Food Information Unit (NEWFIU) on crop prospects, food security and drought situation in July, grazing conditions continued to deteriorate

in most parts of the country due to drought and most regions' grazing is reported to vary between poor and very poor and many farmers are fighting for their livestock's survival by providing supplementary feeds. The southern regions and the north-western parts of the country were the first most affected areas as poor rainfall was experienced in 2017/2018 rainfall season.

The report indicates that, grazing is critical in the north-central regions such as Oshana, Oshikoto, Omusati and Ohangwena and many farmers have moved their livestock to the southern part of the regions and southern Angola for better grazing. In the north-eastern regions such as Zambezi, Kavango East and West, grazing was noted to be substantially fair in areas along the river but fair to poor inland. Many farmers in Omaheke affected by poor grazing have flocked to Otjinene, Eiseb and Ben-Hur in the region in search of better grazing.

Livestock conditions are worsening due to lack of grazing and water with livestock deaths on the rise. Many cattle in communal areas are reported to be undernourished, weak and unable to stand on their own.





*(left to right). Lineekela Kaxuxuena from Ebbenlee Investment, Peyavali Uukunde from Peyavali Rental Company, Councillor of Windhoek East Constituency, Hon. Joyce Namuhuja, Lea Namoloh from Exquisite Bread and Alex Dawid Strauss from Strauss Braai at the recent official handing over ceremony of materials and equipment from the Income Generating Activities Grants (IGA) in the Capital.*

By: David Adetona  
Photo by David Adetona

# WINDHOEK EAST COUNCILLOR HANDS OVER EQUIPMENT TO LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS





The Khomas Regional Council's Windhoek East Constituency Office has once again demonstrated their resolve to address unemployment and promote entrepreneurship in the constituency, when they handed over equipment worth N\$150 000 to owners of income-generating projects as part of government's efforts to implement the policy of job creation at grass-root level.

The beneficiaries received equipment such as electric generators, chest freezers, steel ladders, welding machines, safety construction helmets, gazebos, tents, braai cookware sets, plastic cooler boxes, chairs with tables and many other items that would help their businesses projects flourish from the Income Generating Activities Grants (IGA).

The projects that received equipment are in different categories such as catering, plumbing, tourism, bakery, butchery, construction and hospitality that creates self-employment and at the same time give employment to others within the constituency.

All beneficiaries agreed that the provision of equipment to support upcoming entrepreneurs, such as women, men and the youth will always be a contribution to achieving secure livelihood and empowerment of community members. They further said the assistance is a welcome intervention that helps upcoming entrepreneurs – who cannot get loans from conventional financial institutions due to lack of collateral – to grow their businesses with the donated equipment. Most

of the beneficiaries were grateful and acknowledged the value of the Council and Constituency Office's assistance and support to the growth of their income-generating projects in the communities of the region.

Handing over the items to the beneficiaries, the Windhoek East Constituency Councillor, Hon. Joyce Namuhuja, said the auspicious occasion of yet another handover of equipment to various owners of income-generating projects is the eighth series since the inception of the programme in the constituency. The councillor said the programme aims to reduce poverty, hunger and unemployment particularly in the constituency and the Khomas region at large.

She was also quick to point out that a large section of the country's most disadvantaged population is engaged in small-scale businesses and the government fully recognises the vital role that small businesses or projects play in the country's social and economic development. In the same vein, the Councillor said the assistance given through IGA in the form of equipment to owners of income-generating projects in the community aims to uplift small businesses to become established, sustainable and competitive Namibian businesses over time, as well as to create employment and promote industrialisation in the country. She finally called upon the beneficiaries to work hard and create employment opportunities in the constituency to alleviate poverty.







## Drafting of E-Waste Management Policy underway

By: Desire T. Kahiha

Photo By: Petrus Katonyala



*Deputy Director of Institution Policy Regulation and Monitoring in the Ministry of ICT, Elizabeth Kamutuezu, speaks at the consultation workshop on E-waste management policy*

An unknown author once wrote: “If it has a plug or runs on batteries and it is broken – it’s e-waste”, this is the simplest way to define E-Waste. As the market continues to expand and innovation cycles become even shorter, the replacement of equipment accelerates – making more Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE), a fast-growing source of waste – in fact, many classify it as the fastest growing waste stream globally.

Many do not know what to do with their old and broken equipment and end up throwing them in household rubbish bins and landfills, an exercise that has huge implications to the environment due to the content of hazardous components in EEE, such as mercury, lead, hexavalent chromium and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and ozone-depleting substances. These heavy metals, plastics and glass in e-waste can pollute the air or seep into waterways when

improperly disposed of causing catastrophic effects on the environment. It is important to recycle e-waste to reduce the demand for mining heavy metals and decrease the greenhouse gas emissions from the manufacturing of virgin materials.

There is little awareness in Namibia on the topic of e-waste and almost zero formal infrastructure for the management of these wastes. Under their Solid Waste Management (SWM) Policy which was launched in 2010, the City of Windhoek identifies e-waste as one of the priority wastes. They have registered and licensed e-waste handlers and transporters. E-waste containers are placed at designated landfills, transfer and satellite sites. During a consultative workshop organised by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT), a representative from the City of Windhoek stated that some of the greatest challenges they face include the fact that res-





*Director of ICT Development, Linda Aipinge, addressing participants*

idents do not know where to take their e-waste and this has led to illegal dumping of e-waste. There is no national policy or law (classification) to support their by-laws as a municipality and also the limited data on e-waste. In attendance was Mr. Per E. Hansen, the Chief Executive Officer of NamiGreen, an e-waste management company in Namibia, who also mentioned lack of awareness as a challenge to address e-waste in the country. He added that a professional approach was needed to handle and manage this waste due to the ex-

treme danger it poses when left unchecked. He highlighted three points of approach that his company uses to address the problem of e-waste:

- Raising public awareness on e-waste and why recycling is a good idea.
- Facilitating convenience by helping citizens and companies to rid their e-waste.
- Safely handling e-waste by ensuring that they're properly handled and recycled.

The meeting was the last stage of a

week-long consultation that took place in October 2019, where two representatives from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Mr. Garam Marc Bel an E-waste Officer at ITU and Mr. David Rochat the CEO and Partner of the Sofies Group, participated. These consultations form part of the journey for the formulation of the drafting of a National E-Waste Management Policy for Namibia which is being facilitated by MICT through the Directorate of Information and Communication Technology Development (DICTD).



*Various stakeholders participated in the consultation workshop on E-waste management*





# Govt builds toilets for the needy in Ondangwa Urban

By: Malakia Nashongo



*Councillor of Ondangwa Urban Constituency, Leonard Negonga handing over five toilets to five households in Ontanga and Oshitayi Villages.*

In a bid to address poor sanitation in the constituency, the Ondangwa Urban Constituency Councillor, Leonard Negonga, last year handed over five toilets to five beneficiaries at Ontanga and Oshitayi villages within his constituency. The toilets were constructed under the rural sanitation programme ran by the Oshana Regional Council through the Ondangwa Urban Constituency Office.

The programme targets people who cannot afford to build their own toilets and to improve sanitation in rural communities. More toilets are expected to be constructed under this programme in the next financial year. Negonga said rural communities are characterised by poor sanitation which poses a great health risk especially during rainy seasons.

This programme aims at improving health and quality of life, ensure hygienic environment, protect water sources from pollution and stimulate economic development. Negonga urged the beneficiaries to take good care of the facilities and make use of them in order to live in a clean and healthy environment. On her part, Ndatoolewe Frendrick – one of the beneficiaries – expressed gratitude to the government for bringing services to the people by building the toilet facilities for the needy. “We use to make use of the bushes when nature calls but now we have toilet facilities to make use of.”

This programme was initiated by the Ministry of Regional, Local Government, Housing and Rural development (MRLGHRD) now known as Ministry of Urban and Rural Development (MURD) and was piloted in Zambezi, Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshana and Kavango regions before it was rolled out to other regions.



*Toilet facility*



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*Stalwarts: Founding President Dr. Sam Nujoma with Former President Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba*

# Olufuko festival livens up Outapi

■ **By: Moses Haufiku**

■ **Photo By: Petrus Katonyala**

Every year in August, all roads lead to Outapi, as tourists and locals alike flock to the capital town of Omusati Region to attend the Olufuko Cultural Festival. Hosted by the Outapi Town Council annually at the Olufuko Cultural Centre at Outapi, Olufuko is a cultural

practice where initiation or the rite of passage for girls from childhood to womanhood takes place.

The calm atmosphere and soft buzz of excitement observed during the festival create the perfect environment for the healthy expression of culture at the town. The streets of

Outapi are full of people dressed in traditional garments, dancing and singing cultural songs as they look forward to observe the initiation of Aawambo girls. The town, which is described by many as a fast-growing town in the northern part of the country, becomes lively during the



*Booming business: Namibia's Founding President and Patron of Olufuko Cultural Festival Dr. Sam Nujoma impressed by SMEs' products at the festival.*



Olufuko festival as many other activities take place such as different sports events and musical shows to entertain the visitors.

According to Outapi Town Council's Chief Executive Officer, Ananias Nashilongo, Olufuko Cultural Festival serves as a major economic tourism booster as visitors show up attracted by the rich history of town. The town offers the unique opportunity to experience the natural beauty of the Baobab tree and the historical museum. These places are the most popular tourist attractions at Outapi, particularly the Baobab tree that offers rich history of the country. "When locals and Tourists overnight, they spend their foreign currency to boost the town's economy. This leads to a boost in the town's economy as most of them

buy the local traditional foods and drinks sold by exhibitors at the festival", Nashilongo said.

This year, more than 69 girls from various Aawambo clans took part in the initiation process at their own will and with the consent of their parents. They were dressed in different traditional handmade skirts, some decorated with shell beads and animal skin. They spent seven days in traditional huts learning about their cultural duties. According to Meme Rakel, a senior ritual leader at the festival, the girls were tasked to prepare a traditional powder called 'Olukula' by crushing the Wild Teak tree's roots, and making wooden bowls and cups. They were also asked to make a traditional Omahangu storage facility, pottery, prepare Marula oil and gin made

from a combination of palm and berry fruits. Their fathers slaughtered Bullocks as a gesture of accepting their daughters' transition from girlhood to womanhood. Later, the girls are discharged from the traditional huts led by their elders to attend the Mahangu pounding session. The Aawambo people call this 'Oshini'. At the pounding session the girls produced Omahangu flour for their families. On the fifth day, just before sunset, the ratification of the girls, also known as the 'Efudula', took place. On this day, a female senior ritual leader called 'Namunganga' leads the girls to the kraal where they received formal blessings for marriage. Not so long ago, Namibia's Founding President, Dr. Sam Nujoma, highlighted the importance of preserving culture.





The Father of the Nation, as he is affectionately called, is also a patron of Olufuko Cultural festival. "We must learn from our past to inform our future, because without the knowledge of where we come from, we would not know where we are going and a nation without culture

is like a tree without roots", Nujoma had said.

The number of girls participating in the yearly festival has been on the increase since its inception. The number has increased from just 17 girls in 2012 to more than 69 girls. Discussion is underway to add Olu-

fuko to UNESCO list of world heritage sites.

*Preserving cultural heritage: Transition from girlhood to womanhood*





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# Poultry an alternative to traditional farming

By: Desire T. Kahiha



*The Chicken Runs at the Ohunguriva Investment*



*Chickens being weighed at the Ombujongupa Farm*

The Ovaherero people are known for traditionally placing great value on livestock farming, especially cattle, as their livelihoods are largely dependent on cattle.

Cattle provide milk for Ovaherero people, from which they make drinking yoghurts (Omaere and Omatuka) as well as cream that they further process into butter for cooking (Omaze ou Zongombe) and body lotion by adding a traditional powder (Otjize).

Apart from milk, cattle also provide hide to the Ovaherero people that is processed and used to make garments and carpets. Cattle meat (beef) is a good source of protein and the bones are used for medicinal purposes.

Ovaherero are also partly gatherers of wild foods but cattle remain their main source of sustenance. However, over the years, more and more Ovaherero people started venturing into other forms of farming – other than rearing cattle and gathering wild foods – they also started poultry farming and growing crops.

At Farm Ombujongupa, the

Tjipueja family kicked off the first step of their poultry-farming journey in February 2019, with the production of Free Range Chicken meat for sale with an initial purchase of 100 chicks as an experimental batch to test the market. This first batch yielded an output of 97% full grown chickens at the end of a 32-day period. They have now increased their monthly output to approximately 400 chickens. Although they are still going through the necessary certification process,

they have already become popular with many households that have been very satisfied with the quality and size of the chickens that they produce. Asked why they decided to venture into the poultry farming, the Tjipueja family stated that they want to expose Namibians to healthier eating options than eating red meat only that can cause multiple health problems and also to contribute towards the local economy by selling locally produced chickens. Like the Tjipueja family



*Vetjitavi Mutjavikua in the warehouse at the Ohunguriva Investments*





*The Citrus Trees on Farm Platsak*

of Farm Ombujongupa, Mr Issy and Vetjavi Mutjavikua of the Ohambo-jatate at Otumborombonga near Okakarara ventured into poultry farming as well through their Ohunguriva Investments company. The Mutjavikua family started the chicken business in 2008. Narrating to this publication the idea behind their business, they said, the high demand of chicken that they sold from the few they kept at their homestead made them realise the economic value of chicken and encouraged them to sell chicken on a bigger scale and hence registered a business. After saving money from the sale of chicken, they said, they attended a week-long training at the Kwa-Zulu Natal Institute of Poultry in 2010. With the requisite skills and know-how, they then set up structures and diversified into the production of eggs with 1 500

chicks.

The Mutjavikua family empowered other people from as far as the northern regions of Namibia with their knowledge and business. According to Mrs. Mutjavikua the true value of their business was felt during the 2013 drought when they sustained themselves and their livestock from the proceeds of their business. She added that it was a struggle for the community including her family to buy into the idea of a poultry business but when the benefits from their business were seen, the community changed their perception on poultry farming. The Company went through a difficult patch when she went for a three-month training in Egypt, in Advanced Poultry husbandry but she has since been slowly rebuilding and looks forward to an even more productive stage.

Farm Platsak in the Tsumeb District is another livestock farm that changed to crop farming over time. Namibia Review spoke to the farm Foreman at the time Mr. Gabriel Kahiiko. The farm was acquired in 1998 with the intention of livestock farming but the owner later decided to integrate crop farming of mainly maize production with livestock farming, with a centre pivot of 24 hectares, the farm sells its crop yields to local millers such as the Golden Mills in Tsumeb as well as the Namib Mills in Windhoek. Over the years due to the change into crop production from livestock, they downsized the farm from 9 000 to 3 240 hectares in order to adequately finance the new ventures of crop production, which, besides maize includes citrus production. The citrus fruits are mainly sold at Tsumeb and the livestock at the C Class Abattoir.

Another business venture that Mr. Kahiiko highlighted and this was evident through our journey was that of charcoal production which many farmers have gone into and these are mainly fueled by the high demand from foreign companies from countries such as South Africa. He gave an estimate of a monthly 30-tonne truck sale and this they use to sustain the farm and pay workers' salaries with during the non-planting season.

These are but a few examples of the alternative forms of farming that have become popular amongst the Ovaherero people.



*The C Class Abattoir at Farm Platsak that is near completion*