

EAGLE



WIDENING THE DISCOURSE



PRINCESS GELANE

Hands-Over 2.4 Hectares to Mbulungwane Branch

**OBSERVING
PROPRIETIES-
The SNAT
Mandate**



**The LGBTI
Community: Humans
With all Rights**



**CoLA Award :
A Rain Drop
In The Desert**



**Defending Workers'
Rights In A National
Emergency Situation**





THE SNAT STRUCTURES (Branches and National)

BRANCHES



MANZINI

Manzini Branch
Mliba Branch
Mankayane Branch
Usuthu Branch

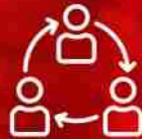
HHOHO
Mbabane Branch
Piggs Peak Branch
Madlangempisi Branch



LUBOMBO

Big Bend Branch
Mhlume Branch
Siteki Top Branch

SHISELWENI
Nhlangano Branch
Mhlosheni Branch
Hlathikhulu Branch
Gege Branch
Mbulungwane Branch



NATIONAL COMMITTEES

Credentials Committee
Resolutions Committee
NASOWECO
NASOWCO
Conference Committee

OTHER SNAT ENTITIES

SNAT BURIAL Committee
SNAT Co-operative Committee
SNAT Burial Services
SNAT Medical Aid
SNAT Mobile



STAY SAFE FROM
COVID-19



#StayAtHome



#WashYourHands



#WearYourMask

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The SNAT Union

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EAGLE



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VISION

To become the SNAT's premium provider of quality content across all media platforms with a high level of loyalty and activism.

MISSION STATEMENT

The SNAT Editorial will lead the new media revolution by helping to build and strengthen a revitalized teacher's union and grow our presence both domestically, regionally and internationally. This we will accomplish with excellence in the way we conduct our union business, in our product offering and in our service to our diverse rank and file.

VALUES

- EXCELLENCE
- SERVITUDE
- INTEGRITY
- SOLIDARITY
- UNIONISM

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THE SNAT MERCHANDISE ON STOCK

Available at SNAT Centre,
Opposite William Pitcher
(Manzini)



Jacket

**(Red, Black, Khakhi,
army green)**

Long E550

Normal E480

Tracksuit	E700
Jacket short	E480
Jacket long	E550
Bodywarmer	E350
T-shirt	E130

SNAT Merchandise ©, 2020



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SNAT Swaziland



The SNAT Union

Do we have an Identity Crisis as Educators?

Globally, trade Unions are bereft of members. I had a torrid time trying to slide around this contentious subject of an identity crisis by us, educators, for many reasons. Well, for all intents and purposes, I know I could be venturing on uncharted territories, touching on a subject many would want to see shifted aside. I couldn't, however, afford to bury my head in the sand forever.

I won't conceal the fact that many a member of the SNAT have called for a workers' education which reaffirms the identity of the organisation while at the same time uphold its aims. An education that shall promote the labour movement's core principles, values and ideals. Of late, there has been notable apathy by members of the SNAT in not only attending Union activities; rather, discussing issues that deal with teachers and our welfare as professionals, a trait exhibited time and again.

Its been said, time and again, that members participation in on-going union activities develops their political understanding and working-class identity, while moments of mass action teach workers not only about tactics, but also about political and economic power.

I fathom to understand as to how did we get here as educators? Schools, where there are members of the Union in good standing, have captured shopstewards who were 'bulawaad' by the SWAPA leader. The damage done by these despots to the Union is irretrievable. Nobody, regrettably, raises a hand in challenging the reign of terror in schools where the rights of workers are trampled upon with impunity by the errant administration. This goes back to what we collectively believe in as workers; our identity as a collective

It is true that work stations have zero solidarity and social networks. It used to happen in the past with the truth that the memory of a more cooperative past lingers, compounding the sense of present loss.

The time has come to develop a class identity as educators; a process tied to the process of class formation, whereby individuals develop a shared sense of belonging to a given class based on their common experiences and relations in the workplace and from there, a sense of shared interests as a class. Let us be workers-fight a common enemy, the employer that exploits us on a daily basis in different angles. The time to rise to the occasion-realise that we can't afford to embrace apathy as the membership, is now. Is that too much to ask? The gauntlet has been thrown to all and sundry: worker consciousness is the prerequisite of a well functioning labour union.

Widening the Discourse...



**SNAT Editor
Mcolisi Motsa**



**CLASS
CONSCIOUSNESS**

meaning, definition, explanation...

SNAT On The Lenses



THE 2020/2021 COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT [CoLA] AWARD TO CIVIL SERVANTS – A RAIN DROP IN THE DESERT



The SNAT SG, Sikelela Dlamini

For three solid years (2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020), civil servants have been engaging on fruitless salary negotiations exercise with their employer of record – the Government of Swaziland. Since 2017, talks at the Joint negotiations Chamber have been hitting rock-bottom, with the Country's largest employer (The Government of Swaziland) consistently offering a zero% adjustment to her workers, thereby forcing the over 44 000 workers to live on heavily eroded salaries as a result of the inflation and forcing them to hardly have their noses above the water.

Unionised

Civil servants who are unionised under the banner of the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT), the Swaziland National Association of Government Accounting Personnel (SNAGAP), the National Public

Services and Allied Workers Union (NAPSAWU) and the Swaziland Democratic Nurses Union (SWADNU), collectively referred to as the Public Sector



Associations (PSAs) have been, as always, at the fore front in the fight for improved terms and conditions of service of all the workers who are under the employ of the Government.

This includes, the uniformed forces, the Non Unionisable workforce (who constitute the senior management cadre within Government) as well as those who decided not to join any of these unions out of their own volition.

Negotiations

The Negotiations have vacillated from ordinary talks at the Negotiation Chamber to Branch consultative Meetings, National Meetings, Public sensitization marches as well as to National strikes at some instances. The road from 2017, hitherto, has been a very bumpy one. Workers have been resolute in demanding that which is due to them. This continued through out financial years 2018 and 2019. The total erosion that had been occasioned on workers salaries during the three years was 19.6%. This means that in 2020 salaries of workers are worse-off by 19.6% as compared to salaries and the living standards that were obtaining in 2016 when the Recommendations of the Salary Review were implemented in 2016.



Public Sector Workers in protest last year {2019}, demanding a CoLA from the government. (File Pic.)

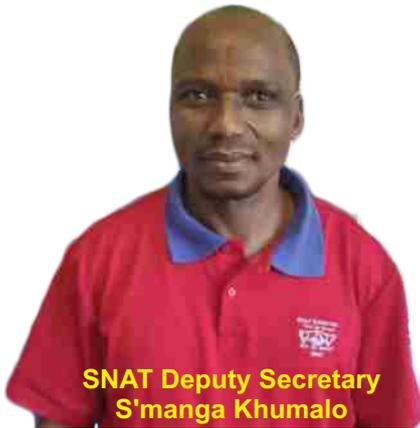
Salaries

When the current financial year, 2020 began, there was renewed hope amongst all Government employees that at least the Mandvulo-Dlamini led Government had somehow had its Damascus moment and that it was going to adjust their salaries significantly, taking the 19.6% erosion reality into consideration. The continued offer of a meagre 3% against the known 19.6% erosion by the Government was an indication that the government was not at all concerned about the welfare of its workers. The Conduct by the Government was both vexatious and frivolous because it disregarded the obtaining economic situation and the challenges thereof that its workers were experiencing on the ground. The PSAs opened the talks with an average demand that was centered around the zone of truth, of 6.7%. This was the most logical demand that was made by the Unions. The Employer failed to make even a single move from their initial offer, much against the basic laws and principles of negotiations. The PSAs finally settled for the E227 million, as arrogantly tabled by the Government provided it was distributed in a staggered approach that would ensure that the lowest paid civil servant got more money or distributed equally amongst all civil servants. The Government could not consider any of the logical approaches so suggested by the workers.

Deadlock

Just when the PSAs were considering signing a deadlock, sanity prevailed on the doggy Government which then started to make some selfish and insignificant moves as well. Since the Government does not want to take responsibility, it proposed a once off payment of 6% of each worker's monthly salary over and above the 3% that was to be effected across the board. Further Negotiations forced the Government to double the once-off percentage and it finally settled at 12% of each worker's monthly salary. This was the final settlement and the Collective Agreement was signed by both the Government and the Unions on Friday (07-08-2020). The money that the workers received as a result of this agreement is very insignificant and won't assist the workers in meeting their financial needs in anyway and can therefore be best described as a rain drop in a hot desert. In essence, this will make the workers to be worse-off in terms of their financial position, with the costs of goods and services rising up sharply at the market. As workers, we needed to rethink our strategies as we are preparing for the Salary review exercise which shall commence in seven (7) months' time. Our members are once again implored to put an extra effort in ensuring that the discrepancies that exist between and amongst our members in terms of the salaries they get, in relation to the general living standards of similar qualified personnel, are addressed.

SNAT Recruitment at tertiary



**SNAT Deputy Secretary
S'manga Khumalo**

The Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT), being the only voice of the teaching cadre and the largest union in the country, still craves growing its membership as an institutional mandate. There is great need to cause a balance in the organisation even numerically. Numbers are so vital in the union's quest to fulfil its mandate. Bringing every cadre on board, from pre-school to tertiary, is but a mammoth task the union faces in each and every term of existence.

SNAT Strategic Plan Objectives

Upon resuming the 2018-2022 office, the National Executive Committee (NEC) expressed a very strong urge to help redirect the interests of the union. It was no surprise then that it convened a three day meeting (07 – 09 December 2018) at the Esibayeni Lodge to devise methodologies and means by which the union could revert to the vibrancy it once enjoyed, wherein members would meaningfully and without restraint, partake in the union activities, craft workable and progressive resolutions, follow the disbursement of their subscriptions, keep the employer on her toes among others.

The meeting was themed, 'TOWARDS A REVITALISED UNION'. The values agreed on were;

- Transparency
- Participation
- Accountability
- Democracy
- Fairness

I am directing attention to objective 1 of the Strategic Plan; TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING MEMBERSHIP BY 40% BY THE YEAR 2020.

The Education Committees

The SNAT has grown leaps and bounds as a brand over the years, boosting the Savings and Cooperative, the Burial Scheme, the SNAT Med, and Burial Services. The Executives of these entities commissioned the Education Committees of the tripartite to get as many members into the union as possible. The sub structure, EDCOM, attacked the objective by making inroads into the tertiary institutions, targeting mainly the final year students each year. I must say that the reception by the institutions and their cooperation with the SNAT has been massive thus far. The tertiary institutions visited each year include;

- The University of Swaziland (Kwaluseni and Luyengo Campuses)
- William Pitcher Teachers' College
- Swaziland College of Technology
- Ngwane Teachers' Training College

responsibility is evidently growing by each day.

The Process

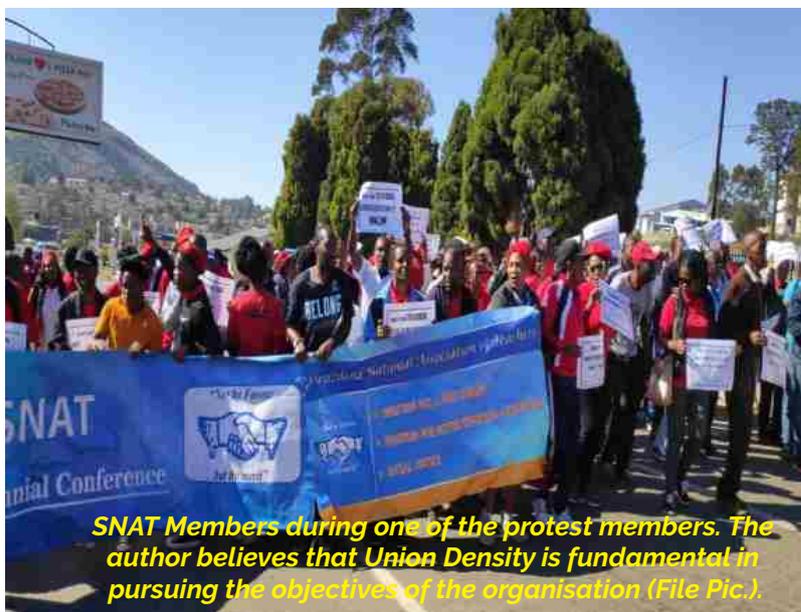
The EDCOMS of the entities visit each tertiary institution above on appointment, solely to introduce the SNAT. This activity thus far has been hailed as a major step to demystifying most misconceptions about the union being a political party that seeks to oust the King and his family, among others. Each entity delivers a 45 minutes lecture from formation to existing practices and how teachers' lives have been improved and are improving as a result of properly implementing policies within the union. After each presentation, there are engaging discussions that leave no stone unturned, much to the satisfaction of the students. Some promotional items are shared with every student present in an attempt to concretise the lectures. The response we get, to this day, is overwhelming thanks to the comrades who work in the institutions as lecturers, some of whom would declare, boastfully and openly, their undying passion for the SNAT. Before circulating the

attendance register at such meetings, a pointed proposal to join is made and how the joining fees would be subsidised as a benefit. We have started feasting on the fruits of such outreach programmes as larger numbers are recorded joining the entities each month, even though mostly on contract basis.

Conclusion

We take this opportunity to applaud all the SNAT structures, grassroot to national, tertiary institutions and prospective teachers for

the support and cooperation displayed as the EDCOM endeavours taking the organisation's mandate forward.



SNAT Members during one of the protest members. The author believes that Union Density is fundamental in pursuing the objectives of the organisation (File Pic.).

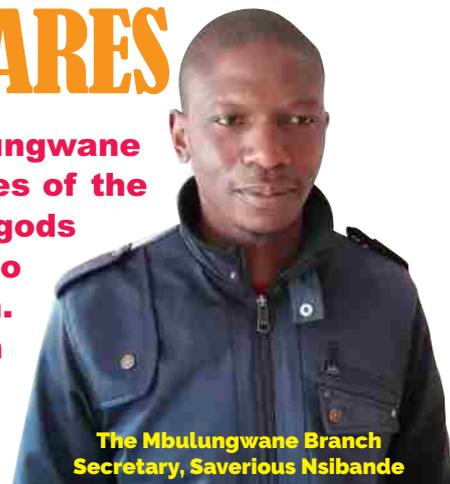
- Southern African Nazarene University
- AMADI University
- Citec College

Since the passing of the 2018 Conference Resolution to also make exploits into the private sector, with regards to recruitment, the

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MBULUNGWANE BRANCH OF SNAT SECURES 2.4 HECTARES

History was made 18 July 2020 when the Mbulungwane Branch of the SNAT joined the rest of 15 Branches of the SNAT that have acquired immovable assets. The gods smiled on this vibrant Branch as it finally secured land to develop in fulfillment of a long-held vision for the Branch. The SNAT Media [SM] took time to engage the Branch Secretary, Comrade Saverious Nsibande on this significant achievement for the Branch.



The Mbulungwane Branch Secretary, Saverious Nsibande

SNAT MEDIA [SM]: Good day Leadership!

Saverious Sibandze [SS]: Good day Comrade Editor.

SM: Tell us my Leader about the Mbulungwane Branch of the SNAT Chief.

SN: Well, Mbulungwane Branch is a Branch under the Shiselweni Region. It is one of the small Branches of the SNAT with only 42 schools in the Branch. It is a radical Branch that exists in the periphery of traditional structures which we respect a lot.

SM: Hmmm... that is great my leader. Tell us about the giant project you just snatched as a Branch as corroborated by the July 18th 2020 event. What inspired all this?

SN : Well, let me start with what Michael Jordan once said that, 'Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen.' Such an inspiration got the Mbulungwane Branch of SNAT thinking after being challenged by the SNAT BOT who rekindled the hope and desire of the Branch to own a piece of land. Should we make it happen? We thought. Why do we have to struggle every time we want to

convene as a branch? For how long shall we be keeping our "supposed assets" on the heads of the BEC members? Is it impossible to invest on land in which we shall erect a branch structure? These are the very questions that necessitated that we think about land ownership as a Branch.

SM: Sounds huge my leader! Tell us more, how did you maneuver through the system?

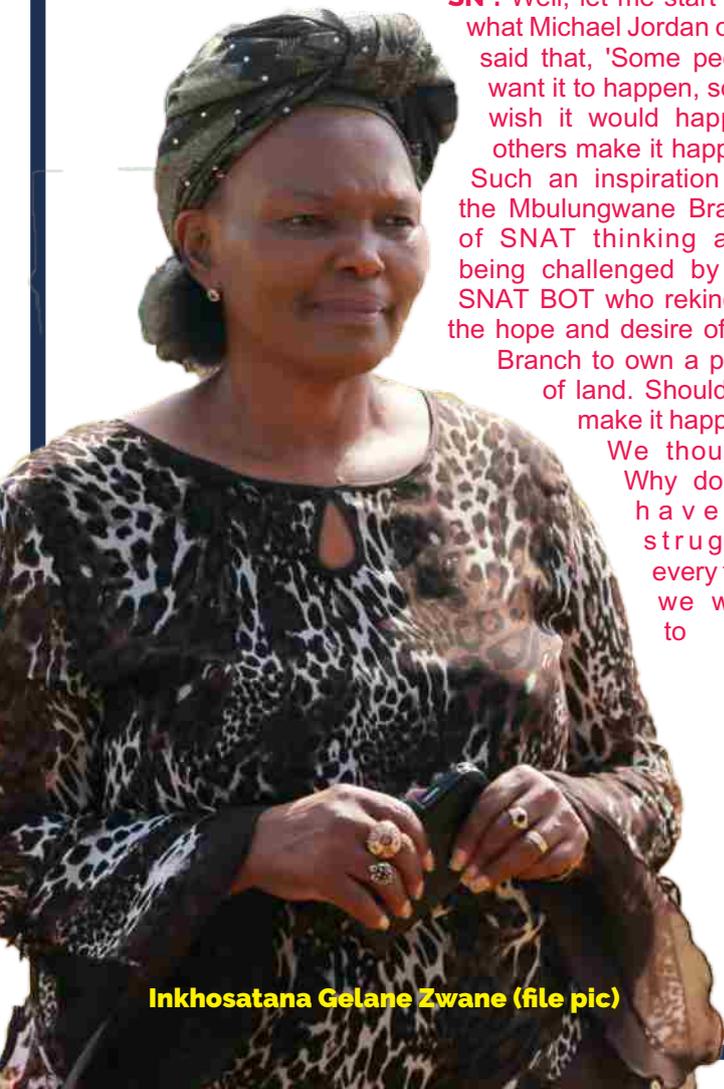
SN: Yes leadership. The Branch had this longstanding resolution of procuring land, and being a completely rural Branch, the only option we had was to fulfill this dream through the khonta system. We then decided to action this resolution with the Branch Chair on the horns. The BEC had to rope in the two available former branch Chairpersons for guidance and advice. Luckily, both Lawuba MP Derick Masuku and Mr. Samuel Mavuso were more than ready to offer their advice and support. It was later Mr. Stephen Dlamini, the current Mbulungwane Branch of SNAT Chairperson who then guided us through the whole process. Boom, on the 18th of July 2020, we were able to secure 2.4 hectares of land as a Branch: a very much ecstatic moment indeed.

SM: Wow! That's awesome to hear my leader. I could feel the excitement on the day. Why choose a rural setting though my leader?

SN: Oh! About that! Securing a plot has always been priority number one. Having mentioned that the resolution on land procurement is very old, it was necessitated by the fact that our Branch is completely rural. Our rural background offers us no option to easily rent facilities for meetings and other services. Sometimes our meetings are frustrated by schools refusing to give us venues. The absence of Branch offices cripples the work of BEC at all levels. Most schools in the Branch are far from the main road which makes it difficult for members using public transport to attend meetings. Hence, it's that rationale that saw us deciding to make this project happen.

SM: Now I understand my leader. Tell me: what is the plan or vision for the plot, huge as it is?

SN: Well, comrade Editor, the main aim of this project is to establish a Mbulungwane Branch of SNAT Centre. This Centre shall have a Multi-Purpose-Hall which shall offer conference/meeting services as well as indoor sports



Inkhosatana Gelane Zwane (file pic)

Ram Dass once asserted that "If you feel a sense of social responsibility, first of all keep working on yourself. Being peaceful yourself is the first step if you want to live in a peaceful universe." This quote was inspiration enough to help the branch realize that SNAT has a social responsibility to its members and the general citizens of the country. Hence, we believe that this Centre will not be complete without offering extended psycho-social support services to teachers, students and the community. Such services cannot be offered under a tree, hence there need to be some space dedicated for such a noble gesture to humanity and the teaching profession. We also believe teachers have an obligation to support literacy in the country by all means necessary. Thus we therefore hope to also have a Library and a Study Centre open to learners and the general populace under the Branch. An Upgrading Centre can also not be ruled out as we have seen our learners giving up on education should they fail to secure enough number of credits after their first EGCSE shot. Issues of gender and sexual reproductive health cannot be left out. We have a gender office in all SNAT Branches which many a times is not operational because it's not housed anywhere. Gender issues can only be dealt with successfully if properly managed and supported. Our failure to have referral centres for gender related matters renders the gender office next to useless. Issues of equality and equal opportunities for all can also be dealt with easily if we have an office dedicated for such even in the rural areas, manned by our gender officer. We can also not leave out the possibility of using this very plot for venturing into Agriculture production to generate income for the branch.

SM: Hmm...that is so mouthful leadership! I am blown away! What is the next step now after securing the Land?

SN: Of course, we are over ambitious but we believe it can be done. We are currently talking with various architects to help us come up with a Site Development Plan [SDP] for this plot. It's that site development plan that shall check the feasibility of our vision and this will see the commencement of development work on this site. We hope this process of contracting a

competent architect for purposes of generating a site development plan shall be concluded before then end of September 2020 so we may look at the issues of funding.



The SNAT President, Mbongwa Dlamini addressing the gathering on the day (Pic. Mcolisi Motsa)

SM: Oh yes! I like the positive energy you have as BEC. Do you have special parties or entities you may point out thus extend appreciation to them?

SN: Definitely comrade Editor! We will take this moment to voice out our appreciations first to the SNAT BOT for sharpening the thought of securing a piece of land for the Branch which saw the BEC prioritizing this long-standing Branch Resolution. The roles of the former Branch Chairs and the SNAT Chairperson of the Branch cannot be

overemphasized as mentioned above. We are thankful to these comrades. Special recognition on the efforts of the Tindvuna of both the Mbangweni umphakatsi (the Chief Justice and indvuna Innocent Maphalala who instructed Babe Ngwenya on his behalf) and of the



Inkhosatana Gelane delivering her speech on the day

KoNtshingila umphakatsi (Babe Shongwe) ought to be made. Without such efforts, we would not have concluded this deal at such a short time.

Branch Developmnet-Main Story

SM: On the Main Day, we saw someone special Blessing the Plot. Can you give her the special recognition my leader?

SN: With certainty leadership! It cannot be proper not to mention another figure: Inkhosatana of koNtshingila Gelane Zwane. She opened her arms to the Branch and welcomed the Branch's suggestion on a suitable piece of land that can fulfill the Branch dreams. Had she not been so welcoming, we sure would not have secured the plot. The efforts of the MP of Sandleni Inkhundla Noah Gama have also not gone unnoticed. We thank all the traditional leadership of the imphakatsi under koNtshingila who supported this venture in deed and in kind. We would have failed in our duties if we do not thank the Branch membership of Mbulungwane Branch of SNAT for entrusting to us the task to be Branch leaders. The SNAT NEC deserves special mention as it has always been up and about supporting our small Branch unequivocally. This acquisition is not for Mbulungwane Branch, it's for all SNAT members in the country. We serve SNAT without fear or favor. We serve SNAT not by favor but by merit and only merit.

SM: Wow! That is refreshing my leader! What message do you have for the Branch Membership as you lead them to uncharted waters?

SN: Well, to our valued members, we may say that we need their support on this fundamentl project. Without the membership, the Branch is doomed. We believe we shall continue working closely with the com



The SNAT NEC posing a photo with Princess Gelane and her entourage

munity leaders within our Branch stretching from Mbava Primary school, swinging past Decapol Primary and Ndunaythini High School, running through Lulakeni and kissing Mphelandzaba High before going up Sigwe Mountain, brushing against Nyatsini and Ntjanini/Mhawu towards Ngudzeni and Velebantfu and resting at Ntabeni Primary before being blocked by Nhletjeni and stretched back to Sandleni up until Jericho High and finally retiring at Patmos Primary School. The uniqueness of the Branch is our strength and we need all hands-on deck.

SM: Thank you so much my leader for your time. Wishing you all the best in your Strategic Direction.

SN: Thanks too Mr. Editor for allowing us to feature in the Magazine. The Mbulungwane Branch appreciates the time and space given to articulate our vision. We are grateful indeed.



The 'gift' for Inkhosatana Gelane Zwane on the day



Some BEC Members handling stomach issues on the day.



Indvuna koNtjingila Babe Mphumelelo Shongwe addressing the gathering on the day.



Inkhosatana Gelane Zwane appreciates the SNAT Mask as handed over by the SNAT President on the day.

The Impact of early unintended pregnancies amongst young girls in school and their right to education.



**SWANCEFA National Coordinator
Nelsiwe Nhlabatsi**

1. Introduction

Early and unintended pregnancy or teenage pregnancy for school going young girls is a cause for concern for most African countries including Eswatini. Literature is showing that a substantive number of girls are dropping out of school due to teenage pregnancy. Eswatini has young people taking the largest proportion in the whole populace with an estimate of about 34% of population aged 10 to 24 years and this translate to about 400,000 out of a population of 1.2 million people. Projections are showing that the number of young people is increasing compared to the older population (Population Projections Report 2007 to 2030).

The Annual Education Census Reports reveals that pregnancy is amongst the main contributor of dropouts for girls. Surmounting the problem is that even young boys are dropping out of school, citing pregnancy as the reason for dropping out. This means that boys intentional or unintentional are forced to leave school after impregnating their female counterpart. This predicament is defeating the efforts of the Ministry of Education and Training whose mandate is to ensure access to education and provision of relevant, quality and affordable education and training opportunities for the entire populace in

order to develop all positive aspects of life for self-reliance, social and economic development and global competitiveness. In light of the fact that the country has such a youthful population, drastic efforts should be made to address the challenge. This research sought to investigate the impact of early and unwanted pregnancies amongst school going young girls in relation to their right to access education. The research is based on an overview and analysis of existing literature and available quantitative data sources. The terms early and unwanted pregnancy and teenage pregnancy will be used interchangeably in this paper.

Research Objectives

- To establish the extent of early and unwanted pregnancies amongst young girls in relation to their access to education.
- To assess the implications of early and unwanted pregnancy amongst young girls in school.
- To determine the root causes of early and unwanted pregnancy amongst young girls in schools.
- To ascertain the programmatic interventions in place to mitigate the problem.



2. The Magnitude of Dropouts due to EUP in Eswatini Schools

The Annual Education Census reports that a significant number of learners are dropping out of school due to

pregnancy; this is a major drawback for the country in as far the socio economic participation for all citizens is concerned. Even though the education sector has been successful in ensuring access and child participation in the education system there are still major push out factors, which include pregnancy amongst others. The findings of the Out-of-School study conducted by MoET (2018) also confirm that learners are dropping out of school due to teenage pregnancy. Precisely the study cites a number barriers and bottlenecks preventing children from attending school in Eswatini these include teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and orphan hood, attitudes towards schooling, violence against children. This reaffirms what the AEC reports have revealed since 2012. Pregnancy as a determinant for dropping out of school is not only affecting girls but data shows that even boys are also forced to leave school if they have impregnated their female counterpart. In the year 2016 alone there were a total of 1308 female learners reported dropped out due to pregnancy in all the levels of education. This is a serious concern that needs major drastic interventions to mitigate the situation. This means the country is still far from achieving its intended goal of ensuring that every Swazi is armed with education to be able to be independent, self-reliant and contribute meaningfully to the socio economic of the country.

In the year 2016 alone a total of 6,570 learners from primary school dropped out school. If death and transfers is excluded (because they may not necessarily mean the learner has dropped out) in the data, we get a total of 3,103 learners who dropped out of school citing the other reasons. Of the 3,103 learners, 230 of them are dropping out due to pregnancy, 203 are girls and 27 are boys. Of note the data also shows that a considerable number of learners dropping out are mostly in grade 5, 6 and 7.



Source www.google.com

These are learners between the ages 10 to 15 years which is an adolescent stage, a very critical period for human development which comes with different pressures. This is the time when many young people initiate their first romantic and sexual relationships. When comparing 2015 the numbers are increasing, in 2015 there were a total of 184 female learners who dropped out of school due to pregnancy. The data also reveals that boys are not spared from this challenge they are also dropping out due to reasons related to pregnancy.

In the year 2016 alone, in Secondary schools (form 1 to form 6) a total of 1,179 learners dropped out of school due to pregnancy, 921 were girls and 258 were boys. From the 921 a total of 626 were from lower secondary (form 1 to form 3) and 295 were from senior secondary (form 4 to form 6). This is depressing data for a country that is exhausting all means to ensure that young people are accessing quality education. It is resource wastage since some of the learners especially from primary school are benefiting from the Free Primary Education program.

A situation Analysis of early and unwanted pregnancy conducted in ten (10) East and Southern Africa countries including Eswatini in (2018) shows that ESA region has the highest adolescent fertility rates in the world. The adolescent fertility rate in Eswatini is reported to be 87 per 1000 females aged 15 to 19 years (UNFPA 2016).

SDHS 2007 indicates that teenage pregnancy was at 24% and over the years it has not shown responding decline despite the numerous efforts in place to curb the situation. This therefore means that the country needs to strengthen preventative programmes addressing EUP. The Swaziland behavioral surveillance survey (SBSS, 2001) reports that in school young people aged 15 to 19 years started sex at an average of 16.3 years compared to 17.4 years to out-school youth. There is an opportunity that schools can be a protective mechanism against teenage pregnancy there is a need to strengthen the existing school interventions.



3. Teenage pregnancy; its implications on the education system

Teenage pregnancy has a negative impact on girl's education. It leads to a high number of learners dropping out of school as revealed by the AEC reports. A majority of pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers never get to complete school. Pregnant and teenage mothers have a challenge re-joining the education system despite the pronouncement of the re-entry policy in the Education and Sector Policy 2018 which states that "every child irrespective of their life circumstances (teenage mothers, children in conflict with the law) has the right to be re-integrated into the same institution that the child was previously attending. This is further emphasized in NETSP (2018) under Inclusive Education policy objective stated as follows "learners should be able to re-enter their former education and training establishment at an appropriate time and in a conducive and supportive environment if they leave prematurely, due for example to pregnancy or conflict with the law, or are assigned another suitable education or training". Findings of the out of school study, MoET (2018) shows that a number of schools do not embrace the provisions of the policy. Such learners continuity of pregnant learners.

are discriminated against by the teachers. It is revealed that some teachers are not even aware of the existence of such policy. In short the policy directive is not implemented by most schools. Notably, the re-integration policy addresses only teenage mothers not pregnant learners. It is indirectly left to the discretion of the schools, which may cause inconsistency in addressing such issues. The Ministry needs to have clear guidelines on how pregnant learners will be handled in view of their right to education. The guidelines should speak to re-integration and continuity of pregnant learners.

Teenage pregnancy reinforces the cycles of poverty and vulnerability for most families (UNESCO 2018). The SADC Strategic framework and Programme Action for orphan and other vulnerable children and youth (2008 - 2015) argues that without basic human needs and services, children and youth become adults who cannot change their worlds for the better.



Vulnerable children typically grow into vulnerable youth and adults, who in turn have vulnerable children of their own. The SADC's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) says education is central pillar to realize the region's economic and social development objectives. So if most of our young people do not get to complete their education, the country will not realize the nation aspirations.

4. CONCLUSIONS

An early and unintended pregnancy amongst school going girls is a challenge for Eswatini particularly the Education Sector. It is defeating the efforts of the country to provide inclusive, equity and lifelong learning as reflected by number of global and regional agenda for development.



TUCOSWA Acting SG
Mduzi C. Gina

DEFENDING WORKERS' RIGHTS IN A NATIONAL EMERGENCY SITUATION

COVID-19 has had devastating impact on workers of Swaziland. In addition to the threat to public health, the economic and social disruption threatens the long-term livelihoods and wellbeing of many workers in Swaziland. The Government, workers and employers – will play a crucial role in combating the outbreak, ensuring the safety of individuals and the sustainability of businesses and jobs

The country is under a National Emergency since March 2020, declared by the Prime Minister in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2006. It is common knowledge that the declaration was in response to the Corona Virus and was intended to curb its wide spread amongst the citizens. The Disaster Management Act, defines an emergency to mean, *“a state in which normal procedures are suspended and extra ordinary measures are taken in order to avert a disaster.”*



The declaration of the national emergency resulted on various regulations being issued by various ministries to respond by sector, within their scopes of function and jurisdiction. The most relevant to us being the, *Guidelines on Employment Contingency Measures in Response to the Corona Virus (Covid-19) Pandemic Notice, 2020.*

The workers cannot strike to push the employer to accede to their demands. In this situation, the worker is held at ransom and tied in a leash. The workers' fundamental rights and freedoms are violated with impunity specifically their right to freedom of assembly which is a key component of the existence of trade unions and collective bargaining. These Guidelines were issued by the Ministry of Labour to, among some of its purpose and objectives, *“promote workplace related social dialogue (consultations) between employers and employees in respect of all employment contingency measures that are deemed appropriate during the period of the partial lockdown or emergency, as the case may be; “safe guard the rights of employers in managing their businesses; safe guard the rights of employees from unfair labour practices disguised as employment contingency measure.”* The objectives further included the desire to uphold the implementation and compliance with international labour standards in all the employment contingency measures to be undertaken.

The practical effects of the national emergency at the workplace

The suspension of normal procedures as envisaged by the meaning of an emergency, calls for desperate measures for the Unions in defending the rights and interests of its members

as well as to the individual workers in the shop floor. The collective response founded on trade unionism is under attack notwithstanding the guarantees provided by the Guidelines. Trade unions receive their mandate from their members through meetings and conferences and such gatherings are currently restricted by the national emergency. The worker rights, supposedly given by the Guidelines, are taken away by the unconducive state of affairs arising from the Regulations which are the basis of the very guidelines. The main Covid-19 regulations had prohibited gatherings on the one hand and on the other hand the guidelines seek to promote social dialogue. The practical effect of the prohibition of gatherings means workers cannot meet as a collective to take a particular stance to influence the dialogue agenda with the employer. The national emergency situation has presented challenges that will haunt the workplace for a long period post the coronavirus. Employers are now achieving their production targets with a reduced workforce. This is a clear pointer to a permanent reduction of the workforce through retrenchments and a serious challenge to the trade union organization density which is already compromised. Many workers will be roaming the streets unemployed, not because of covid-19 but because of a possible permanent implementation



Workers in protest march as led by the TUCOSWA (File Pic.)

of the current contingency plan. The Guidelines on Employment Contingency has introduced a very dangerous practice at the workplace by allowing the variation of terms and conditions of employment during the national emergency. The variation is qualified; it must be done, *“if this becomes necessary in order to save life and property or to meet basic needs of the business or the enterprise concerned.”* This has placed the workers in a very precarious position where their contracts of employments are up for breach and such breach is legalized. The employers surely may wish that such a term could become a permanent feature at the workplace for them to manipulate workers. The only shield that is at the disposal of the worker under the circumstances, is the protection against being subjected to disciplinary proceedings for failing to comply or accede to varied terms and conditions of employment if the worker considers them to be either worse of, unfavourable or unsafe.

TRADE UNION RESPONSE

The trade union movement is faced with the huge task of defending worker rights and their interests even during this time. The tide is, however, seriously against them. Their fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in all the

international instruments are suspended. There are prospects that a war is yet to ensue as trade unions strive to restore normality at the workplace.



Employers have enjoyed production with minimum workforce, through work from home, short times, reduced wages, varied terms and conditions of employment etc. The employer would want to keep this state of affairs post the national emergency. The Government may also want to continuously extend the national emergency to allow businesses to make more profits for less pay. All the three (3) Arms of Government specifically the Legislature and the Executive are dominated by renowned business people who, for their selfish ends, are reforming the country's policies to favour business interests.

The only available tool for workers is their tried and tested unity. The unity is even more paramount now than any other period before as all the gains achieved are being threatened with erosion. The call for the amendment of the Industrial Relations Act of 2000, to permit for solidarity/secondary strikes, must be made louder. In the true spirit of trade unionism, the dictum, “an injury to one is an injury to all,” must be pushed that workers using their united force must be permitted by Law to take part in other workers struggles without consequences or threats of losing their employment. The struggle of a teacher must be a struggle of a banker, and that of a banker must be a struggle of a cane cutter and security guard. Workers struggles must be one as they are fighting a common enemy: exploitation by the employer. The fight should only be intensified and well-coordinated firstly by levelling the battle field. Aluta continua!!!

The Author, Mduzi C. Gina writes in his capacity as the TUCOSWA Acting SG. For feedback and comments, he can be reached at comfortmgina@yahoo.com



THE SNAT EAGLE

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The Plight of Educators in Swaziland

DEAR EDITOR

Thank you for the space to air my views/concerns pertaining the plight of educators in this kingdom of Swaziland. One may be mistaken for a lunatic for airing and revealing the atrocities faced by teachers in the country. Teachers by nature are parents, nurses, guardians etc and that is a valuable contribution to society (in this case, in the kingdom of Swaziland that is drowning in corruption and lack of justice).

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed an open secret of the MoET; that of exploiting teachers. The WHO, in the outbreak of the pandemic, issued guidelines to be followed by countries in order to mitigate/prevent the and or stop the spread of this deadly virus. Some of which include restrictions on unnecessary travelling, public gatherings of large numbers and the closure of schools. Many countries, some of which have the best health care systems in the world, and led by sound leaders, decided to close schools in order to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Swaziland, as we know it, heeded to this advise by the WHO and closed schools in March. A few months down the line, just when we were about to reach the peak of the virus the MoET decided to reopen schools in a staggering approach, firstly allowing Form 5s to return to school and every teacher in high school, regardless of whether teaching the same grade or not. One wonders why these teachers not currently teaching Form 5 class were made to go to work and be in danger of contracting the virus. What really is the motive of the government here?

Pupils, teachers and parents have been greatly exposed to the deadly virus by the decision of the MoET to reopen schools prematurely.

Many pupils, including teachers, have contracted this deadly virus during the period of the reopening of schools by the MoET. It pains me a lot to note how the ministry (the PS Bertram Stewart in particular) reacts to news of teachers contracting the virus. Instead of protecting teachers, as it is their responsibility as the line Ministry he (PS) spew bile and was quoted in one of the dailys saying that these, "teachers may have been infected outside the work place and the one who was confirmed to have passed away due to the virus had other underlying medical conditions." Statistics of pupils and teachers testing positive to the virus are kept under wraps and not made public in order to deceive the world that all is well yet we know very well that both learners and teachers get infected, daily. The question here then is: why is government hiding the exact number of both learners and teachers testing positive? This is very dangerous as more and more will get infected with no follow-up made on the positive and or suspected cases. There is no contact tracing, testing of learners and teachers and worse of all, schools are not fumigated even after the has been a confirmed positive in that particular school.

One wonders why the MoET did not test all teachers and learners before they resumed classes, to ascertain their status. Contrary to what the public has been made to believe by the MoET, the reopening of schools was done prematurely without adhering to all the WHO laid down guidelines and those of the SNAT. Cases of teachers and learners testing positive have been reported but as earlier mentioned, the MoET is trying by all means to hide this information from the public. When schools reopened on the 6th of July 2020, many schools had not met the conditions [checklist] by the WHO and the SNAT to reopen. The MoET forced teachers to go to work and expose themselves to the virus, without any PPE.

The PS in the MoET is on record threatening teachers with the infamous No Work No Pay should they dare stay away from work whilst trying to protect themselves from the virus. The Guidelines on Safe and Healthy Return to Work during Coronavirus (COVID 19) of 2020 have been and are continuously ignored by the MoET including the Occupational Safety and Health Act of which clearly states that, 'an employee may remove himself from a work situation which he has reasonable justification to believe presents an imminent and serious risk to his safety and health.'

Both teachers and learners (parents included) have been made sacrificial lambs by the MoET and in the process also endangering the public, since both teachers and learners interact with the members of society including those with comorbidities. It hurts me the most to get reports that some school Administrators (Principals) are calling for the return of other grades, especially Grade 7 in contrast to the rising daily infections and deaths. One wonders what really is the reason behind the reopening of schools by the MoET and its agents, when other countries like Kenya for example have already cancelled the 2020 academic year? I wonder why is the MoET not waiting for such a time where the virus has reached and past its peak and when they as a ministry have done all what is expected per school in terms of WHO guidelines, kahle kahle hulumente uhlose kwentani?

Cow 1
[Mhlume]

SAVE MONEY- LIVE WITHOUT LOANS

DEAR EDITOR

We are living in an era where the employee doesn't want to give her employees what belongs to them. Government, since 2016, has refused to offer civil servants, including teachers, their CoLA. Life is no longer the same, civil servants are forced to cushion the inflation rate by reducing some of their expenditures. The effects of not getting the COLA for the past four [4] years is greater than what we might imagine. These effects are for life, our pension, gratuity will be affected.

My fellow comrades are deep in debts. Life has forced them to acquire so many loans. Now they are struggling to pay back those loans. Some are no longer able to meet their basic needs because so much money goes to the borrowed loans.

My advice to my fellow colleagues is: save money. Let's try with all means to be patient. If one wants to buy a good second hand car, wants to start a small business, buy land etc, it is better to save for it than rushing to financial institutions [Banks] applying for loans.

If one can afford to pay monthly stop orders of E2,000-E3,000, that person can have E60,000.00 or E90,000.00 in 30 months if he/she can save it. With this amount of money, it is possible to buy a car or start a business. What I like about saving money for what you want to purchase in the future is that you don't owe anyone any interest. All the money you save will be used by you in the future.

Unlike taking loans from financial institutions, e.g. you borrow E50,000.00 then you pay back E70,000.00 including interest. In this case, you have gifted them E20,000.00 extra. This E20,000.00 would have gone to your savings if you were patient enough to save.

Furthermore, saving teaches one to be in control of his/ her finances. It is true that not all things we can buy with our savings. There are some things that need loans. My opinion is that, let's avoid loans more especially if we can save money to buy those items.

What I have noted about these loans is that time and again teachers revolve them. They keep on "benefiting" from those loans. It takes them so much time to finish off their debts. This is not a good thing.

I long the day when teachers will be debt free or be able to control their debts. It is a sad sight to note that bothishela bavele ngenhloko etikweledini.

Lastly, how I wish the newly employed teachers can adopt the art of saving their monies. They must not rush into acquiring loans. Saving is the best weapon they can use to empower themselves in the future.

Bonginkhosi Dlamini
[Usuthu Branch]

Physical inactivity, a modern problem

DEAR EDITOR

The effects of COVID-19 on humanity are well documented. WHO considers the virus as the most crucial global health calamity of the century and the greatest challenge that the human-kind faced since the 2nd World War. Its rapid spread around the globe has posed enormous health, economic, environmental and social challenges to the entire human population.

The closure of schools has not made things easy for educators even though some people think otherwise. Staying at home has greatly compromised the healthy of many teachers. Many of us can attest that at the end of a busy school day, teaching can be very physically demanding. So for those educators who do not exercise, the standing, walking, stretching and lifting, day in and day out has some health benefits for their brains and bodies. Hence, it's no surprise that many comrades have been forced to upgrade their wardrobes.

Research by the WHO also agrees that regular physical activity benefits both the body and mind. It further reveals that physical activity defined by WHO as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure, can reduce high blood pressure, help manage weight and reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and various cancers—all conditions that can increase susceptibility to COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic means that many of us had been staying at home and being physically inactive more than we usually do. Even for us who exercise, it's been hard to do the sort of exercise that we normally do as most sporting activities remain banned.

. The pandemic has reminded us of the importance of maintaining a healthy body—which is a big challenge for our generation. Unlike generations before ours, many of us are less active. Technology has made our lives easier. We drive cars or take public transport. Machines wash our clothes. We entertain ourselves in front of a TV or computer screen. At home we do less manual work. Even household chores, shopping and other necessary activities are far less demanding than for previous generations.

Research suggests that many adults spend more than seven hours a day sitting down at work, on transport, and in their leisure time. Health experts have described inactivity as a 'silent killer' as evidence points out that our sedentary behaviour is bad for our health. Also, there is an inverse relationship between physical activity and mortality and the development of chronic disease: the greater the amount of physical activity, the greater the benefits. There is also a graded dose-response relationship. The unfit or the physically inactive can achieve the largest health gains with slight increase in activity levels. Even patients with established diseases or cardiovascular risk factors can reduce their risk of premature mortality by becoming physically active. The recommended weekly 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity has been shown to prevent and positively moderate disease (McKinney, et al, 2016).

The benefits of physical activity cannot be overstated, and encouraging physical activity should remain an important health care policy objective for the SNAT. Comrades, the benefits of physical activity go past being able to squeeze back into your favourite outfits. It is true that our job demands a lot of our time and energy; however, we must find ways of being more physically active.

Phansi ngekulahlela yonkhe imisebenti kubo Anti phansi!
Phambili ngekutivocavoca phambili!

Thabiso Langa
[Gege Branch]

Workers are Doomed with the Current PM in Power

DEAR EDITOR

So, the cat is finally out of the bag. The PM, Mandulo is a hard nut to crack-the worst devil indeed. This means the country, especially civil servants, are in for a high jump. Nothing will come easy from the imposed Master: Prime Minister.

The current government has proved to all and sundry that no arm tactic by workers can make them change their resolution. I remember clearly in 2018, soon after the Premier took charge; he put his foot down that he was going to give workers 3% as COLA. When this declaration was made, little did I know that the Head of Government was dead serious. It is only now that it has dawned to me that we, as workers, have been cornered.

I recall a statement by one Prince Simelane; to the effect that what they (royalty) have learnt from Mr. Barnabas Dlamini was to tightly clamp down the trade union movement. It is clear to me now that the Prince's words are the government's Mission Statement. Government is out to make sure that Union leaders deliver nothing to the PSA membership, so as to discourage any trade union activity.

I am convinced that government will employ the same tactics in ensuring that the upcoming Salary Review Exercise becomes meaningless and worthless to workers. Dragging the negotiations for a very long period and being adamant on an insulting offer, making workers powerless and finally accepting the meagre offer tabled by government.

The current government has proved, beyond any reasonable doubt, at least to me, that it is a worst devil than the Barnabas-led one. This government is senseless to any suggestion from workers and the public at large.

It started with the re-opening of schools, as schools were opened amid contrary suggestions from many stakeholders. Now, lessons continue normally, without any isolation of positive individuals or any fumigation of work stations. The issue of the alcohol ban was the last straw as despite numerous protests from the concerned public and affected workers, government maintained the ban.

Moreover, that despite the four [4] years of inflation eroding the workers' buying power, government has refused to move an inch from the 3% COLA announced by the Prime Minister, from the top of his head; is an outstanding record set by this cabinet and PM.

Believe me you, when I say this government is out to prove to everyone that in the corporate world, CEOs and Directors do not consult or negotiate; but only inform the junior staff of changes and decisions to be effected. Despite that I do not want to accept or believe this notion, I cannot help it because the premier is a corporate guru.

I urge all PSA membership and their leaders to roll up their sleeves and prepare to go out and die together for the only last thing they need to do is to withstand the violence and brutality of this government.

I pray that workers in the country do not give up in their quest for justice and recognition from this government. As we go forward, I foresee a situation whereby government will force workers to surrender and give up all that they have won in the past battles. This is how evil this government is can be.

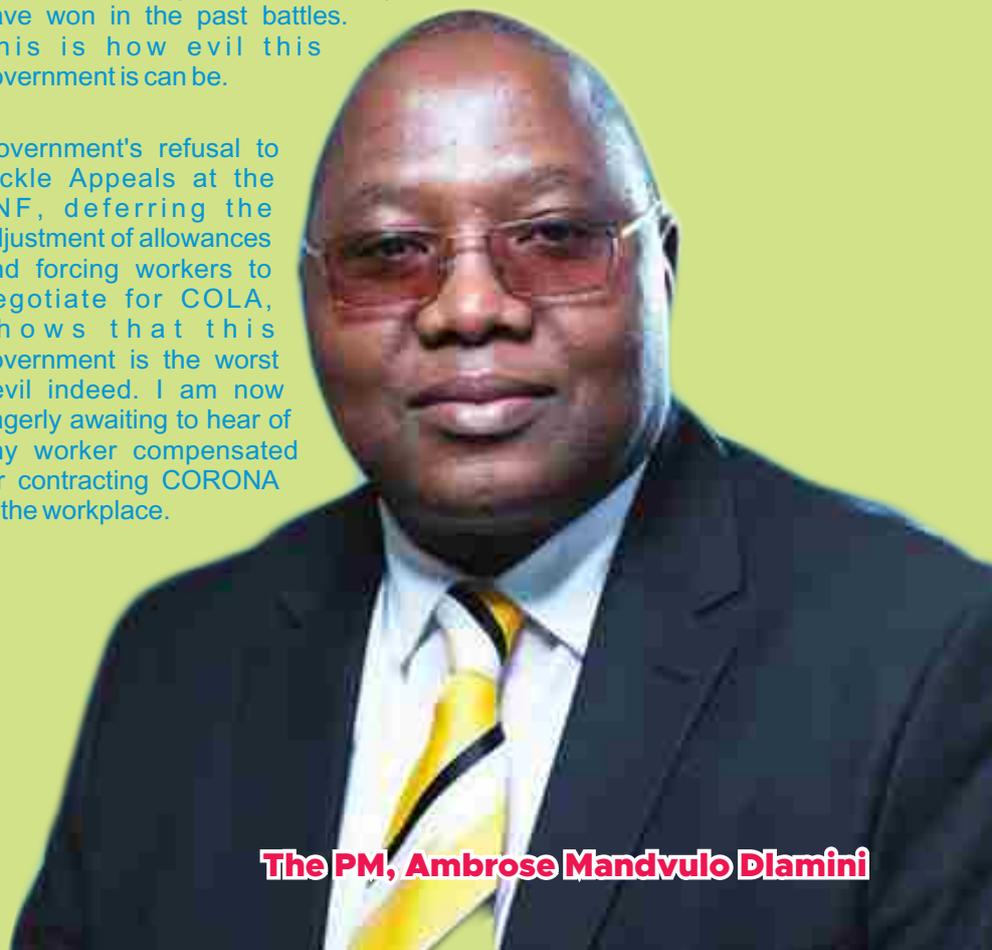
Government's refusal to tackle Appeals at the JNF, deferring the adjustment of allowances and forcing workers to negotiate for COLA, shows that this government is the worst devil indeed. I am now eagerly awaiting to hear of any worker compensated for contracting CORONA at the workplace.

This government is the worst devil indeed, because instead of preparing for the smooth running of schools in 20221, they only talk of adjusting the current school calendar. Instead of building more classrooms in schools, hiring more teachers to ensure that social distancing is maintained in classrooms, ensuring that schools have more stock of soap and sanitizers, as well as adequate running water, they only talk of reopening all grades and levels in schools.

All civil servants, especially teachers, who are at work now, have been declared frontline workers. They must have waterproof overcoats, safety boots, protective gloves, googles and all. This must be worn and left behind at the workplace or properly disposed.

As it is, the lack of these PPEs is showing that government declares a survival of the fittest situation. This and a lot of other factors, proves that this government is THE worst Devil indeed.

Lubalo Khumalo
[Nhlangano Branch]



The PM, Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini

Government Should Finance The Re-opening Of Schools

DEAR EDITOR

It is not debatable that the COVID-19 has left devastating effects on all aspect of our lives, that is, economically, socially, psychologically, etc. The damage caused by the virus will take time to undo. The time lost while on lockdown cannot be recovered.

The effects of the COVID-19 on the education system of Swaziland are just devastating. One can say that the education sector was caught with its pants down, with nowhere to hide. Without face to face interaction between the teachers and the learners, the teaching and learning process grinded to a halt.

The question the becomes: where do we begin to pick up the pieces, in trying to get back normal? One must bear in mind that we now have to live under this 'new normal' of masks, sanitisers, social distancing and frequent washing of hands. Schools are not exempt from this new normal.

For many schools, this brings about a great challenge for many reasons. Most schools do not have the facility needed to live under the new normal. The worse part is that they can't even afford to install or buy the necessary facilities, given the financial challenge in most schools.

It is generally believed that education is supposed to be a social equaliser. This means it should take learners from different social backgrounds and place them at the same level by the time they are through with the schooling system.

It is the obligation of the government, specifically the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET], to make sure that all Swazi children have access to quality, equitable education, no matter their social background. Whether from rural or urban, rich or poor backgrounds, etc, education is supposed to place all learner at the same level, by the time they are done with the 12 years of schooling.

The new normal, under COVID-19, means all schools should adhere to certain health standards (which government referred to as the "compliance checklist for school opening").

These include the availability of clean, running water, soap, hand sanitisers, thermo scanners, hand washing basins and more teaching/ learning space.

In order for all schools to be able to meet these standards, it requires government to step in and assist, because most schools cannot afford to buy these things. Different schools have different resources. Because of the huge gap in resources in schools, it has become a case of "the haves and the have-nots."

Now education is no longer the social equaliser it's supposed to be. This is because there are schools that will not be able to comply, meaning they should not open, as they will be a health hazard, whilst other have no problem complying, and will open. This has to do with the difference in financial resources in schools.

Government needs to step up financially, and make sure that schools are ready to reopen. If we reopen, without schools being ready, then what was the purpose of closing them on the 17th of March? Schools were not safe then, they are still not safe now. Not unless government steps in and provide all the required necessities, most schools will be a hazard to the health learners, teachers and support staff.

The Minister of Education and Training [MoET], Lady Mabuza, told Parliament that government needs about E56 million to open schools. Without sourcing that budget, they are pushing ahead and opening schools. This can only mean one thing, a very few schools are ready to open, whilst the rest are a health hazard.

As education stakeholders (parents, teachers, learners, support staff, etc), we should push and make sure government steps up and provide all the necessary resources, lest we turn the schools into COVID-19 breeding grounds. If we don't act now, it will not end well, it will end in tears for us as education stakeholders.

Madoda Nkhambule
[DS Manzini]



THE SNAT EAGLE

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OBSERVING PROPRIETIES – The SNAT Mandate



SNAT RS, Emmanuel Dlamini

The SNAT was established in the year of the Lord, 1928 and in terms of Section 27 of the Industrial Relations Act.2000 (as amended), hereinafter referred to as the IRA, for pursuit of the fundamental interests of Teachers as both Citizens and Employees. The Mission has always been that the SNAT, "Shall strive to improve the professional, socio-economic status of Teachers, enhance Collective Bargaining for Teachers and encourage maximum participation and dynamic provision of quality Education to the Learner and the Swazi Nation at large

Notable complaints within the SNAT

There have been informal concerns coming mostly from School Administrators, with some alleging that the SNAT that they had joined and subscribed to over the years;

- Was of late setting 'ordinary' Teachers against Headteachers and more so when dealing with Industrial Relations at duty stations.
- No longer resembled the Union of yesteryears, hence their voice had not been heard by the Employer in the latter years.
- Seemingly condoned such as Professional Misconduct (as prescribed under Regulation 15 of the Teaching Service Regulations.1983 and the Code of Conduct), through convenient protection of the 'culprits.'
- Had gradually impressed upon Headteachers that their interest in the Union was misplaced. Out of frustration, anger and bitterness, some reportedly joined the Principals Association and only to then realise their desperate escape from the periphery to oblivion.
- Preferred Legal representation for the 'ordinary' Teacher than the Headteacher yet both being subscribing Members of the Union.

The 'should have been'

Ordinarily, the Case Study approach would have dealt with named cases or allegations as formally reported, on the basis of but not limited to the Body of Evidence sustaining the allegations and as measured against the Body of Jurisprudence (elements thereof relating to Case Law).The Column will deal deliberately with such as the above, once a Test Case has been received for use as an example and where the Writer would also be Authorised, so to.

The whence?

In this feature we will highlight characteristics of the SNAT Mandate from an internationalist view, with the express intention to either draw imperatives therefrom and/or address particular concerns thereabout, according to need. The Author has been motivated by the poetic connotation in the adage, "Not to know where you are coming from is to stay perpetually a child."

Establishment of the SNAT – The SNAT was established in the year of the Lord, 1928 and in terms of Section 27 of the Industrial Relations Act.2000 (as amended), hereinafter referred to as the IRA, for pursuit

of the fundamental interests of Teachers as both Citizens and Employees. The Mission has always been that the SNAT, "Shall strive to improve the professional, socio-economic status of Teachers, enhance Collective Bargaining for Teachers and encourage maximum participation and dynamic provision of quality Education to the Learner and the Swazi Nation at large." Article 4.0 Of the SNAT Constitution & Bylaws.2012 (as amended), refers.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights – On December 10, 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted same as a Doctrine by Resolution #217 of its 3rd Session in Paris, France. The document established a set of Principles for the Rights of Individuals. It is also referred to as the UN Charter.

Swaziland's Membership of the United Nations – On September 11, 1968 following celebration of the (purported) independence of the kingdom of Swaziland on September 06, 1968 the country joined the United Nations General Assembly wherefore the Security Council thereat during its 1450th meeting adopted Security Council Resolution S/Res/257 (1968), "Admission of Swaziland to Membership of the United Nations." The delegation thereto was led by its first Head and Prime Minister, Prince Makhosini (as he then was). By extension, the country committed itself to the subsidiaries of the UN, including the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Principles of the latter which this particular Article also has basis on. Swaziland was considered as one of the earliest signatories to the UN Charter (see – 'The permanent Mission of the kingdom of Eswatini [Swaziland]to the United Nations).

Adoption of the country's Constitution – On July 26, 2005 Swaziland adopted the new Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland Act #001.2005 (hereinafter referred to as the National Constitution) and wherefore the King, (albeit exercising powers reasonably construed as above the same Constitution and any domestic Law as derived therefrom), raised the document at Sibaya (Supreme Council of the Swazi Nation – Section 232 thereof), further committing to the

Introduction

When the suggestion to have dealt with, the perceptions by some School Administrators (Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers in this instance (in accordance with the Education Act.1981), that the SNAT as a Union and pockets in its Leadership were apt to chase them away from their Membership (in thought, word, act or deed,) the logical reaction was to direct attention to the question of Mandate.

Not necessarily to clear the obtaining perceptions of Parties involved but to deliberately cause engagement that is based on what ought to be.

Reflection

One was quick to recall the day when Bongani Austin Dlamini (popularly known as Sigcokosiyanincinca or simply, Sigcoko) was invited as a Panellist at an event held at the Mountain Inn, Mbabane, to articulate a Traditionalist perspective of the Gender landscape which had notoriously rendered women in our patriarchal society, as second-class citizens yet societal scales had proven that they remained a critical element of our socio-economic sojourn as a common people.

Having acknowledged the facts as advanced from domestic, regional and global statistics by Speakers before him, Sigcoko then broke the ice in his introduction to a generous applause even from those who had murmured as he approached the podium. He averred that, whilst the recorded developments had reflected the status quo as obtaining, it was incumbent upon each concerned citizen to clearly distinguish between Swazi Culture, Swazi Law and Custom on the one hand, and practices by certain purportedly influential individuals "(bantfutsile nesive lesibuke bona)" and even some communities "(ngisho nemimmango leneTikhulu eveni lakhile)" that have conveniently degenerated, polluted and adulterated what was to remain our heritage in the context of the Swazi as a common people. "Asehlukhanise kutsi loku ku siSwati, loku ke kungumkhuba." He reiterated.

protection thereof whilst acting in common purpose with other Citizens and in terms of Section 2 of same. This National Constitution succeeded the Independence Constitution, which came into effect on September 06, 1968 but was repealed by King Sobhuza II through the 'King's Proclamation to the Nation #12,' (the so called 1973 Decree) on April 12, 1973. It is worth noting that the new Constitution still did not repeal the said Decree. (DUBE, B & MAGAGULA, A 2012 "The Law and Legal Research in Swaziland." Globalex).

Commitment to global trends – Section 236 of the National Constitution deals with International Relations, including the endeavour to uphold the Principles, aims and ideals of the global institutions listed under Section 236 (1) (d) of same.

Compliance with International Agreements – Section 238 of the National Constitution prescribes the manner by which International Agreements of various nature become effective in Swaziland. This may include but not limited to the application of Conventions, Treaties and Protocols, in the context of this feature/Article, cascading from the global theatre to take effect in the domestic scenery through Acts of Parliament, mainly and as illustrated hereunder.

The SNAT Mandate

Article 23(4) of the UN Charter enshrines the Right of Workers to form and to join Trade Unions for the protection of their interests. This part extends from 'The Right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.'

Section 32 of the National Constitution provides that in line with the UN Charter, (1) "A person has a Right to practice a profession and carry on any lawful occupation, trade or business."

(2) "A worker has a Right to –

- (a) Freely form, join or not to join a Trade Union for the promotion of the economic interests of that worker, and
- (b) Collective bargaining and representation."

Sections 26 and 27 of the IRA provide for the Qualification for Registration and Registration of Organisations, respectively, both which the SNAT complied with.

Section 28 of the IRA illustrates the Effect of Registration of Organisations and in line with the lawful pursuit of the interests listed thereunder and, 'bona fide.' Also presented is the fact that upon issuance of the Registration Certificate, the Organisation becomes a Juristic Person and wherefore its Officers are expected to act and/or have acted in the furtherance of such interest as could be associated therewith, in as far as the Law permits.

Section 29 of the IRA provides the minimum standards of a registered Organisation's Constitution or authorised working document. It is readily expected of SNAT Members, aspiring Members and even those somehow persuaded to forgo their Membership to first measure the current SNAT Constitution against the requirements of Section 29 of the IRA to identify areas requiring of attention so as to even address concerns or misgivings, by way of compliance.

Section 34 of the IRA prescribes Powers of the Court in regard to Constitutions and Returns, among other requirements for compliance. Even the SNAT cannot amend/fail to, the Constitution without being monitored, cannot expend public funds (Member finances) without audited statements submitted for monitoring and ought to recognise relevant authorities.

Section 35 of the IRA enforces Compliance with Constitutions. It goes on to afford any affected party including the Commissioner of Labour (Monitor), the Right to approach the Courts for a specific recourse. Members of the Organisation and the public are also protected in the process.

Section 42 of the IRA provides for Recognition as Collective Employee Representative, for which the SNAT applied and was granted such on March 18, 1992. The Recognition Agreement between the Government of Swaziland and the SNAT in matters of Recognition and Negotiating was signed by A.H.N. Shabangu (Minister of Public Service – as he then was) with the witness being M. Vilakati (Ministry of Education PS – as he then was), for the Government and M. K. Masuku (SNAT President – as he then was) with the witness being M. Zwane (SNAT Secretary General – as he then was), for the SNAT.

The application and subsequent Recognition were for being the Exclusive Employee Representative for such categories of Employees as were named in the application.

All Teachers, Headteachers, Principals, Subject Associations and Service Associations whose Terms and Conditions of Service extend from their employment through the Teaching Service Commission (TSC), as a Service Commission in terms of Section 172 of the National Constitution, as read with Section 4 of the Teaching Service Act.1982.

In its application, the Recognition Agreement implements the ILO Convention 98 – The Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention. The SNAT therefore, organises/recruits from the listed categories and further represents all of them at the Bargaining Chamber.

Representation is through designated Officers of the SNAT, at various levels of Union activity and starting with the Shopsteward at the duty station.

Section 109 of the IRA under the Code of Good Practice as read with Parts 4.4 and 9. of the Recognition Agreement provide for the identification, enhancement and protection of the Union representatives in the course of their Union duties during working hours and upon permission from the immediate supervisor, at their duty station.

Section 39 of the IRA as read with Part 9.3 of the Recognition Agreement ensures exercise of the Right to Freedom of Association (Section 25 of the National Constitution) as read with the ILO Convention 87 – Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention.

Section 44 of the IRA provides for the Agency Shop Agreement that is entered into between a Recognised Organisation under Section 42 of same, as an Exclusive Employee Representative like the SNAT, and the Employer (Government in this instance), to have deducted from the salary of non-Members of the SNAT (in this instance) an amount not exceeding the equivalent of what the non-Member would have paid monthly had he/she been a Member. This Agency fee is paid to provide a relative balance between the exercise of the Right not to join the SNAT yet enjoying the Right to Representation at the collective bargaining chamber (Ministry of Education & Training - MoET/Ministry of Public Service - MoPS/Government Negotiating Team - GNT for Bilateral Negotiations or the Joint Negotiations Forum [JNF] for Joint Negotiations including other Public Sector Associations), which is funded by the Members through

Subscriptions on the one hand whilst on the other, enhancing the provision by the SNAT for competently discharging the Legal obligations listed in the Recognition Agreement.

Through prescription in the same Section 44, the non-Member's Agency fee is deposited into a separate bank account and to only serve interest that benefits the benefactor, wherefore a structure ought to also be in place on how consultations will be conducted by the recipient Union and how the non-Member could seek redress whenever feeling not represented/protected, accordingly.

The argument by some SNAT Members that non-Members benefit from the efforts of the Union unfairly, requires fair assessment of the extenuating circumstances. The SNAT is at liberty to pursue the Agency Shop Agreement, a process that is already underway.

Whereas Section 43(6) of the IRA bars the Employer from deducting from the wages of an Employee with respect to the fees to more than one Organisation, there are cases where a Headteacher has dues deducted from his/her salary for subscriptions to both the SNAT and SWAPA/EPA (The SNAT-NEC is currently dealing with this anomaly in line with the Conference Resolution on same). Meantime, concerned Headteachers ought to decide on their preferred Membership and way before the net closes in, to even compel them to decide within limited timelines.

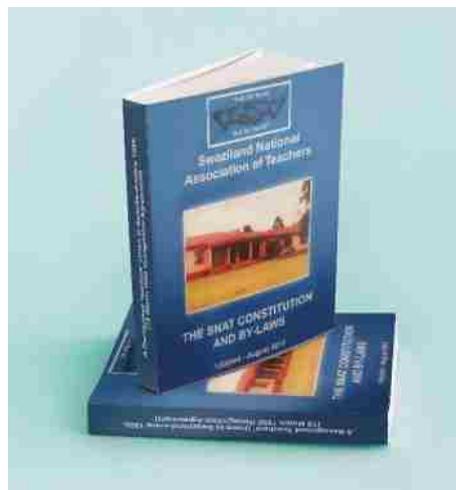
Funded Representation

Through Member Subscriptions, the SNAT is able to do the following, in pursuit of favourable Terms and Conditions of Employment as negotiated for.

- Capacity Building on the body of Precepts that regulate and fortify the Contract of Employment for all Employees under the Teaching cadre.
- Collective Bargaining as regulated by the Recognition Agreement, on Terms and Conditions of Service.
- Information sharing on matters of the MoET as a department, with units thereunder.
- Participation in the initiation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review of Policy.
- Advising, consulting, defending and promoting collective interests of Members of the Profession or any other cause that may be of interest to SNAT Members including matters of Public Policy and Public Administration.

Instances where non-Members lose in the status quo, where the Agency Shop Agreement has not been concluded, include the hereunder, inter alia.

- Legal Representation which otherwise calls for Member funding.
- Active participation in decision-making structures of the Union, even where the decisions have a direct bearing on the non-Member's interests.
- Failure by SWAPA/EPA to realise that their Member issues/interests ought to be transported by the SNAT as the recognised vehicle. The failure to present their issues to the SNAT further stretches the perception that the SNAT no longer cares and thus further tattering the fabric that would have otherwise nurtured the Industrial Relations gap between Headteachers and some of their 'subordinates' who are SNAT Members.
- Active participation in the recreational facilities and programs for SNAT Members, including international social relations providing exchange programming.
- Accessibility to the benefits accruing from Membership of the subsidiaries of the Union.



Caution

It is expected of the SNAT to apply herself with judicious caution, in light of the following.

- Section 42(11) of the IRA cautions the SNAT not to risk loss of the Recognition Agreement by reason of material breach in failure to service the conditions contained therein or falling short of the at least 50% of fully paid up Members threshold. On the flipside, Parties including but not limited to SWAPA/EPA, MoET officials et al, whose intention may mutilate the clout of the SNAT in its application should notice that such conduct may as well be legally acted upon.

- There have been SNAT Members who allege that the deduction for the SWAPA/EPA Subscription, in addition to their SNAT one, was not authorised by them yet no action has been taken against the responsible agent thus far. Headteachers in this situation may be acting in common purpose with the Employer to circumvent Section 43 (6) of the IRA. The SNAT should develop Recruitment Protocol whilst concluding the Agency Shop Agreement, neither to be tempted to coerce non-Members to join besides out of free will nor to induce fear in the minds of the indecisive that still require relevant persuasion to join the Union, way- before unforeseen circumstances catch up there with.

Conclusion

After all has been said and done, the whereto from here could include the following considerations.

- The SNAT represents both Members and non-Members thereof, as a Legal obligation.
- Headteachers have equal Rights and Obligations as Members of the SNAT.
- The SNAT should develop Protocol for Legal Representation and enter into a Collective Agreement with the Government on such as a suitable Grievance Handling Procedure, qualifying internal remedies.
- Headteachers with double deduction for dues to more than one Organisation should decide and act on their choice of Membership or risk Legal action there against.
- The SNAT should hasten registration of the Agency Shop Agreement
- Complaints should be directed to the relevant Union structures and up the ranks until due process is realised with a view to the relief as sought.
- Non-Members should consider joining the SNAT instead of paying the Agency fee yet operating as some subset of the Membership instead of actively partaking in Union business.
- Branch Executives should ensure compliance with the Recognition Agreement and address Industrial matters, accordingly.
- Action should be taken against organs of State function that perpetuate interference with the lawful commitment of the SNAT to her Legal obligations.

WE ARE THE UNION THAT WE OUGHT TO BECOME!!

The author, Emmanuel Dlamini, is the current SNAT Recording Secretary. For feedback on this article, he can be sought at Emmanuel.dlamini@yahoo.com

After 3%...



Lot Vilakati
[Siteki Top Secretary]

My third take is the over jubilation by the SNAT following the excellent job done by the PSAs leadership, the SNAT NEC inclusive. It is very difficult to play with the referee, for some of us who have been in football knows how difficult it is to have a referee playing, winning is very symptomatic to $y=0$. At the moment, its our game with the Government Negotiating Team [GNT].

Negotiate

We did not negotiate for the 3% but it was announced some years before we even started negotiations of the current financial year. The literal pushing and pressing down our throats of the 3% from the GNT was knocking on the doors of neutral negotiator where both teams will submit to an independent board that will take a decision after hearing submissions from both sides. We can, perhaps, allow day light harassment by the GNT when people literally negotiate for themselves, not the workforce. The equal distribution of the E227 million was the best way ever increment that had to happen in our life time if negotiations were fair in the country. 3% of E70 000 is E2 100 and 3% of E3 500 is E105.00. The increment of the highest paid is 20 times the increment of the lowest paid civil servant. As if that was not enough, the highest paid is having a series of benefits while the lowest paid is trailing. At the end, she is paying high taxes with nothing or little allowance of E600 house allowance and E0:17 cents per kilometre to work. The poor will remain poor. The game has been on and on and on for a long time.

Increment

Lets rewind to the famous salary review of 2004. The Primary Teachers Certificate holders were left behind by the same employer with no increment. Comrades died and those who were left and still in the service are owed with their case still pending in the courts. Jesus Wept. The pain of Primary teachers is yet to be told believe me you. Those who pass laws that satisfy their stomachs make circulars that benefit only them not the populace. With the introduction of POCA, I think they must start visiting such guys.

Historians used to say history repeats

We did not negotiate for the 3% but it was announced some years before we even started negotiations of the current financial year.

itself. B o o m 2016 salary review, where our HODs were left behind with E1.00 increment.

It was a battle within a battle when we were supposed to come out and support them in their case but even them were supposed to be supported to support their case with government. Even today, the case is still with the Swazi courts. We are doomed.

My take still remains with the pain in the primary schools. Recently, government called all headteachers to submit names of teachers who upgraded themselves from Diploma to Degrees.

The challenge is the number of degreed posts which are in the primary schools which belong to the headteacher and Deputy headteacher. I believe, My Take for sure is that all headteachers and Deputy headteachers are on degrees, looking at the number of degreed primary school teachers. As much as Diploma holders qualify for the same post but competition does not permit one to still hold same. What will happen to the Degreed Primary teachers? Are they going to be upgraded too because as far as I remember, the salaries of the Diplomas, STDs and PTD is equal?

As a union, we have a duty to visit our line ministry on same, register with them that if a teacher has a Diploma, whether at Primary or high school, upon upgrading himself or herself to his post, he must be upgraded too with remuneration. The rigmarole, so they say, also exists even in high schools whereby Diploma teachers are teaching at senior secondary school without getting paid for that post, most are those in the Science Department. This is also a case that needs the union's attention. These teachers should be compensated because you find that there is a shortage in the department unlike in the other Departments where your find that our comrades with Degrees are wrongly placed in the primary schools.

TEAQ must be given much power by the union members. The case is with the Courts over the issue of qualifications and salaries. The comrades are being robbed in broad daylight their benefits. This must truly come a stop.

Till we meet in my fourth take: casualisation a cancer to the union.

The author, Lot Vilakati, is the Siteki Top Secretary and Lubombo Region Secretary.

ENSURING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN TIMES OF COVID-19 IN SWAZILAND

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94 per cent of the world's student population, up to 99 per cent in low and lower-middle income countries. Swaziland is no exception to the impact of the deadly virus thus the need to ensure learners have access to an education,

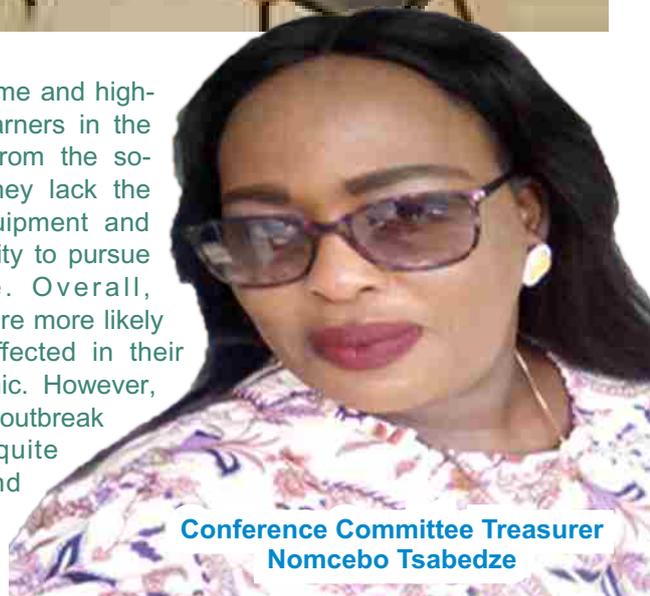
Education is a human right. Over the past months, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has spread across the country, infected so many individuals and claimed 70 lives so far. The rapid surge of the pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to all aspects of daily life and the government have adopted unparalleled measures in an effort to halt the spread of the virus and 'flatten the curve'. As the country's economy collapses and the population remains in lockdown, no one can tell with certainty what the next few months will bring.

Access to education in times of a Covid-19

As a result of the pandemic and the need to practice 'social distancing', the country has closed down all schools and higher institution of learning. Thousands of learners are affected by school closures with only Form 5 operating. Unfortunately, as schools shut down and classes moved online, social and economic inequalities are exacerbated. While the transition to online education has been rather smooth in developed countries, which largely benefit from the necessary infrastructure and technology to ensure academic continuity, this is far from true in the country where our education systems is still lagging behind.



In addition, in both low-income and high-income countries, many learners in the country are still suffering from the so-called 'digital divide,' as they lack the essential technological equipment and adequate internet connectivity to pursue their lessons at home. Overall, underprivileged individuals are more likely to be disproportionately affected in their lessons during the pandemic. However, the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on education has been quite overlooked in political and public discourse since the start of the crisis.



**Conference Committee Treasurer
Nomcebo Tsabedze**



An educator conducting a virtual lesson (Pic. Sourced From www.google.com)



Education as a human right

What does international human rights law say about the right to education and corresponding State obligations? Education is a fundamental right enshrined in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ([UDHR](#)) and Articles 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ([ICESCR](#)), two of the core United Nations human rights treaties. Various other global and regional human rights instruments also recognise the right to education and further expound on its specific dimensions. The UDHR and ICESCR provide that primary education 'shall be compulsory and available free to all.' On the other hand, secondary and higher education are not compulsory but 'shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means.' As with all economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights, the right to education is subject to progressive realisation and the availability of State resources (see Article 2 ICESCR).

In 1999, the Committee on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights published its General Comment No.13 on the right to education, elaborating on the normative content of Article 13 ICESCR and States parties' obligations arising from it. Although not legally binding, General Comments are considered to be authoritative interpretations of the provisions contained in the Covenants. The Committee identified four interrelated components on the right to receive an education:

- (i) Availability
- (ii) Accessibility
- (iii) Acceptability
- (iv) Adaptability.

In the context of the COVID-19 outbreak, the second and fourth components are of particular interest. Accessibility can be further divided into three overlapping dimensions: non-discrimination, physical accessibility and economic accessibility. Hence, education should be available to all without discrimination, affordable (primary education shall be free) and if necessary accessible via 'modern technology' such as 'distance learning programs'. In addition, adaptability

entails that States' education systems should be flexible in order to adapt to changing societal needs as well as the needs of learners.

Conclusion

While school closures are a necessary measure to halt the spread of COVID-19, it must be remembered that education is a human right, and the country should employ all necessary measures to ensure its continuity in times of crisis. Planning and reforming education systems to anticipate the risk of disruptions to education is therefore essential. As the country continues to experience its greatest disruption to education, lessons must be drawn from this unprecedented challenge. As the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights underlined, education is an empowerment right, a tool for all individuals to fully participate in and contribute to society. Let us not forget that the learners of today will be the leaders of tomorrow, and that these leaders will in turn need to respond to perhaps even greater crises than the one facing humanity today.

SCHOOLS SPORTS DURING COVID-19

schools reopening, it was important to organize training on COVID-19 management in the school for all ESSA Management Committees. The National Executive also realized that sadly even if Schools do reopen, there was no way that Schools Sports could continue in 2020 as both teachers and pupils would be pressed for time to cover the syllabus in time for exams. This, of course, would deprive pupils of a whole year in their development in the different sporting codes.



The trainings for Committee members were successfully held at the SNAT Centre over a period of 1 week. In observation of COVID-19 Protocol, only 20 people were allowed per session, so the 85 Committee members were trained according to their positions, i.e. Chairpersons, Treasurers, Vice Chairpersons, Secretaries and Vice Secretaries.

As ESSA, we would like to thank the SNAT National Executive and PSHAAC for making these trainings possible.

Going forward, School Sports will work closely with the different Sports Federations (Athletics, Basketball, Football, Netball and Volleyball) and Sports Council to comply with their COVID-19 Protocols. In addition, ESSA is also in the process developing its own Protocol for Schools Sports in the future. The ESSA would like to wish a speedy recovery to all infected people and also send our sincere condolences towards those who have lost their family and friends due to this Corona Virus pandemic.

Lastly, let us stay safe by wearing our face masks, washing or sanitizing our hands regularly and as well as observing social distance.

For feedback on this article, kindly e-mail to schoolsports.swd@gmail.com



ESSA General Secretary, Felicity Dlamini

When we first heard of the Corona virus, a lot of us never thought it would eventually get to Eswatini and it would take so many lives. We assumed it was just another virus and the reality sank in when suddenly there was lockdown and schools were closed indefinitely. All sports were suspended.

Fresh from winning elections, new Branch Committees were rearing to go and in anticipation of the National Athletics Competitions which were scheduled for April 2020, some had already held their Branch Competitions. Most had held budget meetings with schools, some had even gone as far as booking and paying for competition venues. Then suddenly, schools were closed. Not wanting to be left behind in fighting this pandemic, the ESSA National Executive which is incidentally headed by the SNAT Vice President, Cel'colo Dino Dlamini, who by virtue of this position is head of Health and Wellness, held a meeting to discuss how ESSA could contribute to the fight against COVID 19. It immediately became obvious that with talks of



The ESSA National Executive during the COVID-19 workshop at the SNAT Centre, May 20, 2020 (Photo by Mcolisi Motsa).



ESSA Committee Members listening to presentations on COVID-19 at the SNAT Centre, May 20, 2020 (Photo by Mcolisi Motsa).

RISE UP BLACK WOMAN!



Busisiwe Shongwe

Have you ever asked yourself what the world would be like without women? Yeah, they are an essential part that makes the world to turn around but do they get the treatment they deserve? Apart from the problems that we face as Africans, Swazi women face great adversity, violence, injustice, poverty, domestic challenges and traditions which are deliberately imposed to keep women down and oppressed. There are so many stereotypes and perceptions which are meant to disparage, rather than uplift them.

Execute

This is one specie that is expected to execute many roles in our society. In Eswatini they are the ones who plough, weed and harvest the fields. They are also expected to raise kids and do house-keeping. However, even if they can break their back, they will not be recognized as independent and dignified beings in the society. The most painful part is that they are butchered each and every day. It is very sad that our government is doing very little to protect these essential beings who are the fundamental engines that contribute in generating greater income in the continent.

Citizens

It is thus very sad to see these powerful engines of the society being treated as second class citizens. The saddest part is that women have accepted their fate and are not willing to change. In our society, women are classified in the

same category as children. It is like they can't think independently. They always need a man to think on their behalf. They need a man to succeed, etc. We have seen this so many times in our society. For example, a man would say "Ngisayolandza bantfwabami", meaning "I am going to fetch my kids." At that moment, he is referring to the children

and the wife. Sadly, most women do not see anything wrong with this. What role can Swaziland Government play?

Firstly, our government needs to realize that growth and development of the country is largely dependent on the advancement of its women. The country's underdevelopment is largely due to its reversal of high esteem and advanced status that its women are supposed to enjoy.

Campaigns

Secondly, the country should start campaigns to re-educate Swazi men on developing equal participation of women instead of treating them as second-class citizens. Creating employment and education for all people within the economy, whilst also

creating safety nets for those in need, has to be implemented as a matter of urgency.

Is there anything that women can do?

In the previous sub-topic, I have discussed the role of government in helping the women; however, we have seen that our governments are relaxed and are not prepared to change the situation.

"Swaziland has a deeply patriarchal society, where polygamy and violence against women are normalized, deeply unequal cultural and religious norms, and a traditional system unwilling to make any change. All this contributes towards the daily discrimination faced by women. Despite claims that Swaziland was a modern country, the reality is, despite pledges and commitments, women continue to suffer discrimination, are treated as inferior to men, and are denied rights."



It is then paramount that women join arms and fight their ordeal. It is very sad to see that a great number of African women have accepted their fate; assuming it as their destiny. Most of them see and feel the pain; however, they feel so handicapped that they don't realize any option of breaking away from their fate. They have accepted their position as second-class citizens and miserably, don't see any hope for a change.

Difficulties

I once asked one Swazi woman about the difficulties she is facing in the country. The answer was baffling, she said, "I am feeling the pain, but what can I do?" I was perplexed and vexed at the same time. That is when I realized that unless African women realize that being oppressed is not a pre-destined state, they can still do something. It is very sad because most of these women end up dead because they feel like they deserve the filthy treatment their male counterparts subject them to. Some even go to the extent of having this crazy idea that if a man exerts violence on them, it is because he loves them too much or they deserve that kind of violent action. Most importantly, nothing beats unity.

Women must unite and fight against the patriarchal system that oppresses them to death.

Secondly, they need to stop looking to Western prescriptions of how to fix their situation. It is not in Western political interests that Africa succeeds. The West has enriched itself on a massive scale by taking advantage of African people and its resources. We have been portrayed as people incapable of independent thinking. Thus, it is an undeniable fact that it is only the African woman that can be able to change her situation. However, they have to first

realize that they are not a charity case and realize the power that they have and use it.

Stereotype

Ola Rotimi once said, "To lie down resigned to one's fate is death, rise up and do something!" Women must fight against the stereotype of the patriarchal society. This is the society that controls what a woman wears, how she walks, how she speaks, how she seats, where she is supposed to work, at what time does she come back at home, etc. This means that a woman does not have a life at all and it is only her that can bring a stop to this.



Women in a protest march in Swaziland Prescriptions

Busisiwe Shongwe writes in her capacity as a Gender Activist in Swaziland. She has great passion on women issues in the society. She can be reached at shongwebusisiwe@yahoo.com



Melusi Simelane, Founder & Director of Eswatini Sexual & Gender Minorities

LGBTI: OUR DIFFERENCES MAKE US WHO WE ARE



Recognizing that other people will not see the world in the same way that you do can be humbling because it means that you don't know everything and that you don't always understand other people as well as you may think you do. The concept of differences among people is not new, we all have some basic understanding of it based on the popularity of this simple maxim "do to others as you would have them do to you." We all know that people are different, but we tend to forget it as soon as those differences don't align with our understanding of how the world works.

"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences," said Audre Lorde. Understanding that differences between people exist is key to accepting all people. It is from this place of acceptance and understanding that tangible changes can be made to the structures that currently exist, structures that actively discriminate against LGBTQI persons

because they are different. Our country's Constitution dictates that we all have the right to equality before the



I a w and equal protection of the law, but I believe we have been forced by reality to recognize that the ruling law is instead "all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

Discrimination

It seems that you must earn your rights and the way you earn them is by toeing the line, it is by denying anything that makes you different. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people have known this for a very long time because they have been told by society their entire lives that they are wrong. They are wrong for being different and this means that they don't deserve to be accepted, respected and they definitely don't deserve the same dignity of freedom from discrimination others receive.

Pain

As a society we often believe that being LGBTI is from the devil, it is against all that is natural, and it cannot be allowed in a wholesome society. Not only do we believe that, we act according to this knowledge. How many times have we sat by and watched as great pain was inflicted on LGBTIs? How many times have we been witness to the terrible treatment they must endure? We accept it because they are less – less deserving of love, of kindness, acceptance, decency or respect. They are less than human.



Marchers in Mbabane during the first LGBTI Pride event on the 30th June 2018 (File Pic.)

Author Kathryn Schultz proposes that the reason we hold onto our own understanding of the world with such tenacity is because we make certain assumptions about those who don't agree with us – the different. We assume that they don't agree with us because they're ignorant, they don't have access to the same information that we do so when we share that information with them then they will see light. If that doesn't work, then the next step is to assume that they're idiots because they have all the information, but they just lack the intellectual capacity to put it together. In the event that they have the information and they're actually pretty smart, but they still don't agree with us then obviously they must be evil. They know the truth and they are intentionally twisting it to suit their own wicked purposes. This refusal to accept each other's differences causes us to treat each other terribly and stops us from making the very necessary changes that this world needs. It is very possible for people to be different without being ignorant, stupid or evil – just different.

I understand why we think it's justifiable to treat other human beings with contempt. If as a society we have spent our entire lives operating under the belief that LGBTI people are wrong and acting according to that belief by hating them or being terrible to them, we are only doing what we believe is right.

Human beings

When we start to look at the LGBTI community as human beings with feelings, thoughts, dreams, pasts and a purpose then we are likely to recognize that we were wrong. We have spent most of our lives causing pain to others, bringing difficulty and inflicting so much harm. Coming face-to-face with our own fallibility is scary because it means recognizing that the discrimination, hate and prejudice we treat them with might not actually be for "the greater good" instead it may be causing greater harm. We hide our continued mistreatment under the guise of righteousness because we only need to feel bad about ourselves and ashamed of our treatment of LGBTI people if we are wrong. It is for that reason that we choose not to even entertain the idea of being wrong.

Beliefs

It is not impossible to unlearn oppressive beliefs we have internalized. It is not too late to look through the lens of understanding and to view others with empathy. We need to take a moment to get a sense of where we really are with this issue. Let us stop focusing on the differences between how we see things and how they see things, it is not a case of us vs them.

We are nation and as we carve our own identity as the Kingdom of eSwatini let's do so with love, acceptance and unity. Let us break the bonds of colonialism that still bind us today and return to the simple principle of 'Ubuntu.'

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PHYSICAL TRAINING: TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY IT CAN TAKE CARE OF YOU



**Physical Fitness Trainer
Badeli Dlamini**

Physical training is the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle, strong body and immune system through physical activity and or exercise. We live in a decade where an unhealthy body is a death wish. You open the door to many diseases when you neglect your physical fitness. Suicide nowadays is not only overdosing on pills or hanging oneself, it's also not taking proper care of your health, taking care of the temple that is the home to your spirit. Let us not apply for an early death by not taking at least a simple walk.

Truth be told, when we think physical training or exercise we think improvement of health and reducing the risk of developing several diseases. If you are regularly physically active, you may:

- reduce your risk of a heart attack
- manage your weight better
- have lower blood pressure
- have stronger bones, muscles and joints.
- recover better from periods of hospitalization or bed rest, etc.

We basically think all things health, the narrative, however, I believe should be changed. Beyond the health benefits, physical training offers a higher quality of life which we all desire. We want to be healthy but we also want to enjoy and love the bodies that carry us.

Physical training is a love letter for your body, a minimum of 30 minutes a day does wonders for your spirit:

- You feel better-with more energy, a better mood, feel more relaxed and sleep better. A healthier state of mind, a number of studies have found that exercise helps depression.

Regardless of the benefits caution must be taken even with physical training especially in light of the corona pandemic, exercising can be tricky with stay-at-home orders in place. It's most important that you follow social-distancing guidelines, exercise can help build your immunity and response, but it won't totally prevent you from getting



sick if you are directly exposed to germs. There are plenty of exercises that can be done from home so that does not have to stop you

- Blocking negative thoughts or distracting you from daily worries.
- Providing an opportunity for increased social contact.
- Changing levels of chemicals in your brain, such as stress hormones.

from being active.

It is often said that it is better to try and fail than fail to try. When it comes to physical training, doing any physical activity is better than doing none. If you currently do no physical activity, start by doing some, increases in daily activity can come from small changes made throughout your day. For instance, the golden number of steps to strive for in a day is 10000, a walk to the shop instead of using a car or sending your kids could be a form of exercise. You can then gradually build up the activity to the recommended amount. Be active on most, preferably all, days every week. An exercise a day keeps the unwanted diseases away while clearing your mind as well. I believe it's called killing two birds with one stone.

In summary, a good relationship with your body is a great investment. When you think good relationship or health however don't just think physical health. Check in on your mental and emotional health as well because often times joint pains might not be because of inactivity but be a result of trauma you haven't dealt with and no amount of yoga will fix that for you. A balance in your physical, mental and emotional health is the real definition of a healthy lifestyle. As you pursue the body of your dreams, pursue the mind of your dreams as well.

Badeli Dlamini is a teacher by profession in one of the Mbabane Branch Schools. She is passionate about physical training. For comments and feedback on this article, she can be reached at: badelidlamini@gmail.com

To Be or Not To Be...

Schools may try to improve curriculum quality by bringing teaching activities and course expectations into "alignment" with learning standards and other school courses—a practice sometimes called "curriculum mapping." The basic idea is to create a more consistent and coherent academic program by making sure that teachers teach the most important content and eliminate learning gaps that may exist between sequential courses and grade levels. With the Religious Curriculum in schools discriminating other religions, we are headed for doom as a country.



The Author, Mbabane Gender, Ceb'sile Mamba

To be pluralistic or syncretistic? Religious pluralism generously embraces the diversification of views whereas syncretism seeks to interweave numerous beliefs under one umbrella. What is our Religious Education [RE] syllabus like, currently?

Influence

According to the University of Swaziland Library webpage, the Religious Education [RE] syllabus will provide the necessary 'influence on the lives of individuals and society'. Interestingly, Moletsane (2020) boldly asserts in her study that 'teachers were of the view that Christian Religious Education was not enough'. Numerous implications could be drawn from such. Does this communicate a skewed consultative process for stakeholders or did those responsible for the implementation have enough time? Then the dilemma is invoked: 'to be pluralistic or syncretistic?' Why was this Christian Religious Education adopted against the multi-faith approach? Was it an authentic move or some selfish and short-sighted instincts took the better part? How can these gaps be supplemented for?

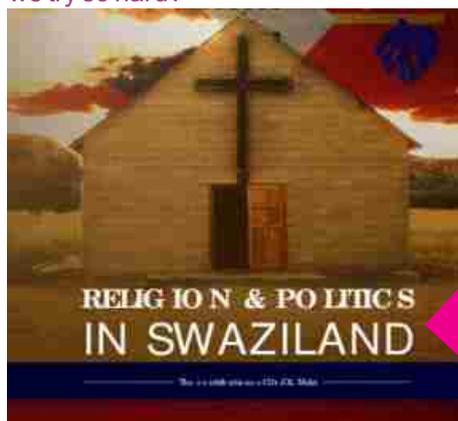
Multi-faith Approach

It is fairly admissible that most countries feel that the multi-faith approach is not the way to go, hence the option becomes the Christian Religious Education solely on the grounds of socialisation. A British journal of Religious Education (2009) scrutinising the Sub-Saharan Religious Education; strongly contends that, this reluctance is premised on the socio-religious ideals mirroring Christian values. True as it may be: however, what guarantee is there that these ideals are founded on fully substantial bases.



A poster promoting religious pluralism [Sourced from www.google.com]

What gets further fascinating is how the Britannica encyclopaedia succinctly spells out the way Christianity frowns upon this syncretistic movement. Now, given the state of affairs, what is the best alternative? Is it either to be honest and accept religious plurality – respecting the otherness of others- or pursuing these syncretistic- extreme inter-religious dialogue? Why should we try so hard?



Could it be that likely for our African indigenous nationals to fully subscribe to purely unadulterated Christian ethics? The core argument prevails as a need to ascertain the depth of the rights enshrined in the Swazi constitution that was adopted in 2005. It is that document which articulates that the major religion is Christianity. Indisputably so, does that however, proclaim it as a religion of choice where the education of our children is concerned? Should it be that giant over shadowing the Swazi traditions? How ridiculous that we could rename our way of life, obscuring our indigenous practices simply for conformity. And surprisingly, it is a pity that our bid to please sounds unwelcome. Apparently, the Christian principles are wary of being mixed with any other, save for the obvious knowledge of it being an offshoot of Judaism. So, automatically; if these Christian ideals were to be respected, multi-faith would and still reigns because it embraces pluralism. Yet, our very own Christian Religious Education bears elements of pretence and tendencies of wanting to identify with something we cannot fully embrace because the nature of Christianity repels polytheism in all its aspects. The worst part is that we are seemingly pushing down the throat our syncretistic approach.

It is only fair to decide whether 'to be pluralistic' as we protect the rights of individuals living in this country in conformity with global trends. Or are we only wanting to be seen to be doing something in preserving our dignity while literally destroying that which we are made of?

A Book by renowned religion scholar and Human Rights Activist Dr. J.B. Mzizi on the subject of religion in Swaziland. (Photo sourced from www.google.com)

Frequently Asked Questions

QUESTION

► Is the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) our Employer?

RESPONSE

► The immediate response would probably be that, "It depends on the context within which the question is asked". Then the highlights hereunder;

- In Swaziland, Teaching is regarded as a service that is part of the Administrative apparatus of State function. See Section 3 of the Teaching Service Act, 1982.
- Teachers qualify to then become Members of the Service, in terms of Section 4 of the Teaching Service Act, 1982.
- There are two (2) categories of Teachers, based on their Employer of record.
 - Teachers in Public Schools (schools that are established and function through Public Financing), whose Employer is Government.
 - Teachers in Private Schools (schools that are established/owned by and function through Private Capital), whose Employer is other than Government although their authorized existence being by Government Registration.
 - Teachers in Private Schools are employed by the Private owners of the respective schools/learning institutions, in compliance with domestic Employment Legislation, including the Employment Act, 1980 (as amended), Industrial Relations Act, 2000 (as amended), Education Act, 1981 and others.
- The Principal Employer of all Government Employees (Public Sector Employees) is the Ministry of Public Service (MoPS), where Terms and Conditions of Employment are centred.
- The Government is divided into various Ministries/Departments, each with a Minister (see Section 75 of the Constitution of the kingdom of Swaziland Act # 1, 2005 as read with Section 7 of the Teaching Service Act, 1982) and a Principal Secretary (see Section 76 of the Constitution of the kingdom of Swaziland Act # 1, 2005, like in the Ministry of Education & Training (MoET).
- The Public Service is divided into various service Commissions, for effective discharge of State function. See Section 172 of the Constitution of the kingdom of Swaziland Act #1, 2005
- Each Service Commission, like the TSC in this instance (see Section 176 of the Constitution of the kingdom of Swaziland Act # 1, 2005 as read with Section 9 of the Teaching Service Act, 1982) has a legal obligation to perform the following functions and powers, inter alia.
 - Appointments (including promotions & transfers),
 - Selection of candidates for appointment,
 - Confirmation of appointments,
 - Termination of appointments,
 - Disciplinary control, and
 - Removal of Officers within the Public Service or any sector of the Public Service.
- Teachers therefore, as Members of the Teaching Service, are employed by the Ministry of Public Service through their own Service Commission (TSC) and wherefore such Service as theirs being administered under their own line Ministry/Department (MoET).
- A convenient illustration would present the following impression:
 - Service → Teaching
 - Service Commission/Regulator of the Service → TSC (Agency)
 - Management Department/Line Ministry → MoET (General control of the Policy Direction and Supervision of the Department).
 - Employment Authority → MoPS (custodian of the financed Terms & Conditions of Service.
 - Employer → Government.

"CABINET "



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WORD SEARCH



- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------|
| CONTAGIOUS | CORONAVIRUS | CDC |
| KEEP CALM | NO FACE TOUCH | COVID |
| OUTBREAK | PANDEMIC | NO SCHOOL |
| SOAP AND WATER | SOCIAL DISTANCE | RNA |
| VACCINE | WASH HANDS | STAY HOME |

SUDOKU

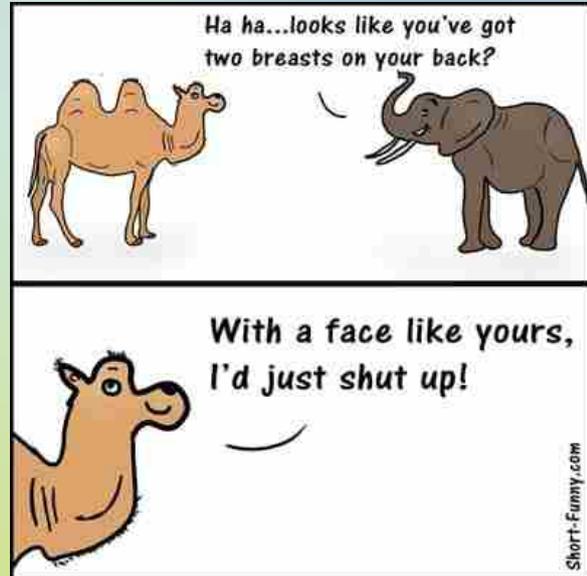
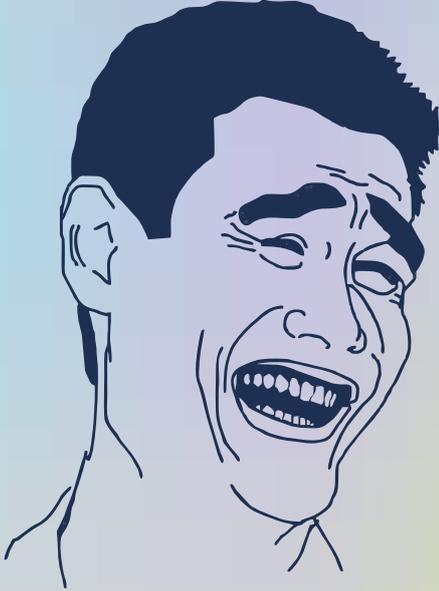
Fill in the puzzle so that every row across, every column down and every 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

Medium Puzzle 1

6	5	9		1		2	8	
1				5			3	
2			8				1	
			1	3	5		7	
8			9					2
		3		7	8	6	4	
3		2			9			4
					1	8		
		8	7	6				

- Clues:
1. Seek a 2 in the centre block of squares
 2. Finish the centre block of squares

LAUGH A WHILE



A man is reading his newspaper and says to his wife: "Michelle, look. Here is an article about how women use about twice as many words per day as men do." The wife responds: "That's because we have to tell you everything twice"

"I'm telling you one last time," a doctor yells at his nurse, "when you're filling out a death certificate, you put the name of the illness under cause of death, not the name of the supervising physician!"



A student at a management school came up to a pretty girl and hugged her without any warning. The surprised girl said, "What was that?" The guy smiled at her, "Direct marketing!" The girl slapped him soundly. "What was that?!" said the boy, holding his cheek. "Customer feedback."

The police stop an old guy in questionable condition at 1 am. - "What are you doing out so late, sir?" asks the police officer. - "I'm going to a seminar on 'The harmful effects of alcohol'," replies the man. - "Are you pulling my leg or something?!" says the police officer, "who would hold a seminar like that at this hour?!" - The man sighs, "my wife."

Patient: "So, doc, what's my diagnosis?" Doctor: "Hmm... I don't know how to say this..." Patient: "Just say it..." Doctor: "OK what's your star sign?" Patient: "Come on! How can that be relevant?" Doctor: "Just humor me." Patient: "OK, my star sign is cancer." Doctor: "See, that there is no coincidence." Patient: ...

A man walks into a police station and announces, "My wife's gone missing." - The police officer says, "OK sir, we'll help you. Since when has your wife been missing?" - The man replies, "Since about a month ago." - The police officer is shocked, "What? A month?! Why on Earth are you coming only now?!" - "Well... I've no clothes to put on anymore."

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