

# EAGLE



## WIDENING THE DISCOURSE



**WEAR YOUR GRADUATION GOWN CAMPAIGN**

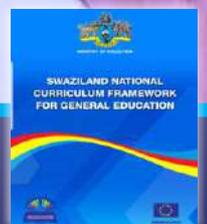
# A SNAT STALWART GONE TOO SOON



**TEENAGE PREGNANCY DURING COVID-19**



**ONE ON ONE WITH COACH ANTHONY MDLULI**



**INSIDE**

**THE NCC ON 2021 COMPRESSION OF CURRICULUM**



The SNAT Platform



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The SNAT Union



# THE SNAT MERCHANDISE ON STOCK

Available at SNAT Centre,  
Opposite William Pitcher  
(Manzini)



<b>Tracksuit</b>	<b>E700</b>
<b>Jacket short</b>	<b>E480</b>
<b>Jacket long</b>	<b>E550</b>
<b>Bodywarmer</b>	<b>E350</b>
<b>T-shirt</b>	<b>E130</b>

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

**Long E550**  
**Normal E480**

SNAT Merchandise ©, 2020



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The SNAT Union

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# EAGLE



## WIDENING THE DISCOURSE



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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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# Fixing the Sector **Requires a Paradigm Shift** in our Approach

**H**ad a moment to reflect on whether the teaching profession will ever reflect tenets of a genuine profession. When one takes stock of the posture of the MoET in addressing teachers' issues, it dawns that perhaps being under the TSC was an error of judgement. I have a plethora of genuine reasons for this supposition. I have always enquired on how teachers began to receive what I may term as 'secluded treatment' from other civil servants. For the record, I am conscious that the material conditions

It is this Council that even advises the Minister on any matters falling within the scope of the Nurse and Midwives Act of 1965. I have noticed how most of these legislations regulating the sectors specify the workers for the department, instead of the work they execute. In Kenya, they have the Teachers Service Commission [TSC]. We have the Teaching Service Commission [TSC]. Now these are two [2] different segments. No wonder the TSC is fully focused on throttling teachers-working in collaboration with

We are employed by a confused agent whose operations leave a lot to be desired. Are we supposed to bury our heads in the sand on the shenanigans thereat? Of course not. We can't afford to do that as a Union, no matter the repercussions. We'll not be deterred. With no holds barred, truth must be told: it will take robust action to ameliorate the mess that we find ourselves in as educators under the MoET. Change of faces in the echelons of power will not salvage the situation. What we need is a combination of panaceas: a multi-faceted approach in lobbying all stakeholders to diagnose the sector from the abyss it is in now. One thing that spins my head is the realisation that it is only the education sector that has a skewed remuneration structure. It is only the education sector that is flooded with contracts, educators sharing posts, no housing for employees etc. The employer finds nothing amiss with all the muddle that educators are in. One certainty though is that we'll not stop to make the 'noise' until the sector embraces fair labour practices, like other sane sectors. We take this moment to wish our avid readers a Happy 2021: The Year of a Salary Review. We shall be here, God willing, to publish the Magazine and Widen the Discourse on bilateral and multilateral issues.



then prompted such a resolute resolve to advocate for the formation of the United Teaching Service [UTS] as the MoE toiled with the lives of teachers.

Thing is: almost all public servants are employed by the Civil Service Commission [CSC]. Nurses have what is referred to as the Nursing Council: an autonomous body which was established by the Nurse and Midwives Act No. 16 of 1965. The Swaziland Nursing Council is committed to the promotion of professional excellence and quality nursing care, protection of the public trust by ensuring that nurses who wish to practice nursing in the Kingdom of Swaziland are eligible and qualified to meet licensure and other practice requirements.

the MoET to think of educators as 'machines.' We [the human face] do not feature in the Legislations of the sector. Teachers in the Republic of Tanzania are regulated under the Teachers' Service Commission Act No. 25 of 2015. Kenya has the Teachers Service Commission Act. No. 20 of 2012 which manages teachers in schools. What happened with the ambiguity with the core mandate and functions of our Teaching Service Commission [TSC]? If there is one entity that has a serious identity crisis, it is the TSC. No wonder the higgledy-piggledy situation in our sector.



# SNAT



# On The Lenses



**2021**  
Not by Favour but by Merit

**The SNAT NEC (2018 - 2022)**

**PSAs in a Protest March for a COLA**

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
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30	30	30	30
31	31	31	31

**SCHOOL TERM**  
1st Term: 1st November - 31st December  
2nd Term: 1st January - 31st February  
3rd Term: 1st March - 31st May  
4th Term: 1st June - 31st August  
5th Term: 1st September - 31st October  
6th Term: 1st November - 31st December

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# A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE EFFECTS OF GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS AMIDST COVID-19, ON THE EDUCATION SECTOR



**Sikelela Dlamini**

The SNAT SG

## Introduction

The advent of the corona virus created huge challenges for humanity in both developing and developed societies alike, with developing economies like ours having been hit the hardest. The responses and interventions by the Government of Swaziland towards such challenges of late, must assist us as we are trying to re-imagine the future. It is incumbent upon us as educators to focus on effects of the pandemic in our sector – Education. Such an analysis may assist us to better prepare for the future and to come up with well thought strategies of ensuring that both our members and our trade are protected. This brief analysis focusses on Unemployment, Online Learning and Working and Living Conditions of educators in light of the two Collective Bargaining Agreements that we entered into with the Government.



## Increase in the unemployment Rate

As a result of the corona virus, the Government has reduced the number of teachers who are employed in public schools, thereby increasing the unemployment rate within our sector. When the first lock down was sanctioned in March last year (2020) there were those comrades who had already received posting letters,

waiting to be called by the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) into signing new contracts. But that never happened until the completion of the calendar year in December, 2020. In December 2020, close to 2000 more teachers had their contracts expiring as well. Currently, the Government of Swaziland is contemplating not renewing the contracts of these educators as well and that will only increase the already high numbers of unemployed graduates and this is a very painful experience. As the SNAT, we are against the placement of teachers in fixed perpetual contracts as it is now happening because the work that these educators need to be doing is there and is in abundance. However, whilst we are still escalating our calls for the creation of more permanent teaching posts within our sector, we are alive to the fact that whilst that debate has not yet been won, those who were employed on contract must continue to be engaged so that they at least get a salary. Everything shall then be normalised once an agreement regarding the creation of more permanent posts is reached. We are quite aware that the Government is raising the cash liquidity card when she is challenged to employ more teachers but the reality on the ground is that the present teaching force cannot adequately handle the about 360 000 learners in our public schools.

## Online Learning

Online Learning has become a critical vehicle of imparting knowledge on the learner. As the SNAT our support for this kind of learning is dependent upon several conditions. These include adequate provision of learning tools and materials such as data, radios, smartphones, network connectivity, amongst others. We are aware that any learning to be effective must be adequately directed by the teachers and as such teachers need to be trained on the use of these various media platforms, if this strategy is to be effective.

Teaching and learning during the Covid-19 era underscores the need to maximise both direct and indirect instruction, as it were. The sad reality on the ground is that there are those Grades which cannot be subjected into media learning, under any circumstances. These are the lower



primary grades; Grades 0, 1, 2 and 3. That is why our discussions with the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET] emphasized more on a type of learning that will combine both media and face to face learning. However, as the SNAT, we cannot allow such innovations to promote a wide digital divide amongst the 933 public schools in the country. Our sentiments on online learning as the SNAT were well espoused by the SNAT Editor, Comrade Mcolisi Motsa in his weekly Sunday article which he published on February, 07, 2021. Our fear for the creation of such a divide is that it will further widen the gap between education that is delivered in private schools and those affluent public schools, and those schools which are not well capacitated with such resources.

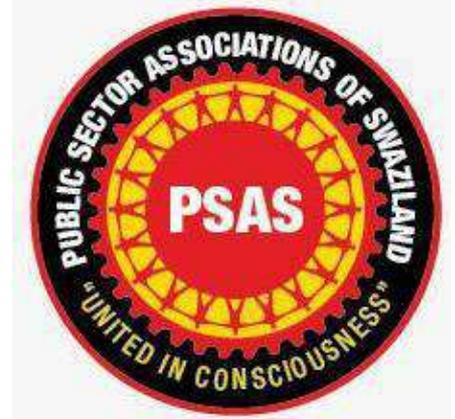
At the end, we will have Swazi children who are more knowledgeable than others and yet they are in the same level. The result, at the end, will portray better performing schools and worse performing ones, thereby creating huge inequalities regarding admissibility of these children in tertiary institutions, and by extension their legibility to be enrolled in the national scholarship programme. The result will be that, those kids who attended poorer schools, from poorer families will obtain low credits in their final exam, something that will make them to be easily outcompeted by those who attended education from affluent schools and having to come from richer families. In the long run, the security of employment will favour learners from richer families and leave out the majority who come from poorer ones.

**Working and living Conditions for Teachers**

The advent of the pandemic shall further worsen our working and living conditions in the near future. The perennial failure of the Government to set correct priorities for Swazi citizens, even though as unions and wider society have been advising the government, has caught up with us. We have been calling upon the government to invest significantly in critical sectors of the economy such as Education and Health but they never heeded our advice and we were labelled as anarchists. The Coronavirus has forced Government to spend more on the day-to-day health needs such as provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and oxygen masks and now it is clear that huge investments are to be made to the education sector as well, if schools are to open and operate smoothly this year (2021).

The Government has already started making funny excuses that she cannot afford to spend more on other pressing issues such as the review of salaries and allowances for civil servants, including teachers. Allowances for civil servants were last reviewed in 2004 (16 years ago). The Cost of Living (CoLA) has been increasing ever since. Currently house rentals average E2000.00 for an ordinary teacher and yet the Government is still offering E601.00 before tax. Commuting allowance is still being paid at E0.17 per km. At this point in age, civil servants do not have Medical Aid Cover and yet a majority of them live with underlying medical conditions [comorbidities] and as such their need for medical attention increases by the day. With most of our schools built in rural areas with no proper services, our members deserve Hardship Allowance.

Comrades are also reminded that the 2016 Salary Review Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Government and the Public Sector Associations (PSAs) was made an order of the court. The registration of the 2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement on allowances, as an order of the court, is a process that is still



PSAs Logo [Courtesy Photo]

Government will embrace the Rule of Law and set a good example for all employers to follow. This year [2021] as civil servants we shall be getting reviewed salaries and allowances according to the aforementioned CBAs. As Unionists, we need come up with well-thought-out strategies that shall be used in forcing government to honour these CBAs.

**Conclusion**

The problems that confront us as the working class are real. Covid-19 has acted as a shield to the government since huge gatherings and processions are outlawed, as an intervention to disrupt the rate at which the pestilence spreads. Our power as a Union lies in collectivism and mass action. These leaves us with few choices through which we can force compliance on the part of Government. Our Courts have also become a critical support system for the government and as such, cannot be trusted. However, we cannot afford to fold our arms and remain seated in our closets. Inaction will be the worse form of action under the present circumstances.



Workers in a protest in 2019. [Picture courtesy of SNAT Media].

underway. In this agreement, the Government committed to review all allowances this year (2021) as part of the whole Salary Review Exercise. We are highlighting all this so that comrades are able to appreciate that as National Office Bearers [NOBs] of the PSAs, we have not relegated our fiduciary duties to the background in this regard. However, we have known historical occurrences in which the Government has defied orders that were made in court.

# TEENAGE PREGNANCY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**P**andemic-related school closures are impacting the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescent girls. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to more out-of-school children than any other region in the world. It also has the highest teenage pregnancy rates globally, making the region uniquely confronted by how to address and accommodate pregnancies and young mothers in school. Teenage pregnancy should not bar adolescents from realising their future dreams writes the SNAT Gender and Human Rights Officer, Sifiso Vilakati.



**Sifiso Vilakati**  
The SNAT Gender and Human Rights Officer

The Pandemic has seen a rise in the number of unwanted/unintended teenage pregnancies among the girl child.

School closures during the lockdown has resulted in girls spending more time at home with many people known and unknown to them as most people had to go to their communities/homes during this crisis to try and curb the spread of the disease. This was done Globally by many Governments. Girls were spending more time with boys, men, cousins and uncles than they would if they were to be in school leading to greater likelihood of engagement in risky Sexual Behaviours and increased risks of Sexual Violence and Exploitation. Teenage Pregnancy is also linked to lack of Sexual Reproductive Health

Education and services in schools and clinics as all Governments are focusing on giving COVID-19 Pandemic a priority in all Health issues and Health Facilities.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has wreaked unprecedented havoc on children, families, communities around the globe, disrupting vital services and putting many millions of lives at risk, especially girl children whose futures look bleak because of the pregnancies.

In Swaziland, since schools closed due to COVID-19 pandemic in March until July 2020 when completing classes re-opened Grade 7, Form 3 and Form 5 after the partial lockdown 263 cases were reported by the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET] of students who have dropped out due to Teenage Pregnancy.

**T**eenage Pregnancy refers to children who get pregnant between 13-19 years old. Nowadays we also have pre-teenage pregnancy where young girls below 13 years also get pregnant!

### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS THAT CAUSES TEENAGE PREGNANCY

- Peer influence
- Unequal Gender power relations
- iPoverty
- Religion
- Early marriages
- Parental neglect
- Lack of comprehensive Sexuality Education
- Non use of contraceptives
- Culture (some) etc...

Teenage Pregnancy during COVID-19 may keep 1 million girls out of school in Africa, including Swaziland, and its affecting 1.6 billion learners over 90% of the worlds school going population.



Sourced from google.com, in reference to South Africa.



Photo sourced from google.com

We as the SNAT thank the Government and the Ministry of Education and Training [MoET] and all MoET stake holders for the National Education Sector Policy of 2018 which has the Re-entry policy enshrined that no girl child must drop off from school due the Teenage Pregnancy but must be re-admitted to the school without any hindrances and finish their education as the boy child who impregnated her continues with his education.

The Minister of Education and Training [MoET] Lady Howard Mabuza made a clear statement in both print and electronic media that all schools must admit all pregnant pupils.

As schools will be opening for the new year [2021], as the SNAT, we expect no student to be discriminated. Pregnant or not pregnant, the girl child has a Right to Education.

We really expect all Headteachers to conform to the re-entry policy without fear or favour and govt must make sure to capacitate teachers / parents / students about this policy as everyone both young or old, male or female has a right to education.

\*Thembi Motsa\* 15 who lives at Nobody's Village [kaNdzawoyabani] used to dream of being a teacher but after schools were closed in March 2021 during the lockdown, she was impregnated by her 23-year-old boyfriend. Thembi's future is blurry and no longer seems as bright as she once visualised. Her dream is now shattered.

As the SNAT, we expect our Headteachers, our colleagues, our comrades to admit these learners both at Primary and High school levels.

The UN now estimates that nearly 11 million learners both at Primary and Secondary globally who are Girls are at risk of not returning to education following school closures due to COVID-19 Pandemic.

February is the month of love as many comrades celebrated the Valentine's day let us all Rise, honour and love our women workers, front liners, home care workers, domestic workers, farm workers and our children.



**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY TO ALL SNAT MEMBERS!!**

# THE BANNING OF THE SNAT AND THE SETTING UP OF THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY TO INVESTIGATE THE TWO INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS (1976 AND 1977)



**Sikelela Dlamini**

The SNAT SG

During the course of the 1977 strike, teachers used the term 'Liyana' in describing the effectiveness of the Industrial Action in the different Branches of the Association. The 1977 strike by the teachers was so effective such that the powers-that-be banned the Union. This strike action literally brought the country into a standstill. Consequential to the fact that this action drew its vibe from the South African experience of the students' uprising of 16th June 1976, Swazi students also took part in the strike action by teachers (Masuku, 2013).

This strike did not only hit hard on the teaching fraternity but also in other sectors as a result there was industrial turmoil even within various employers. The two strikes (1976 and 1977) took part at a time when King Sobhuza II had abrogated the

Independence Constitution and usurped Executive, Judicial and Legislative powers. The hostile political climate presented unworkable conditions for the Swaziland national Union of Teachers, such that the two strikes were seen as purely political weapons that were meant to destabilize the reign of King Sobhuza II.

The Principal Secretary [PS] in the Ministry of Education (Mr. EV Dlamini) and the then Commissioner of Police (Mr. TV Mthethwa) summoned the SNAT leadership of the time to the William Pitcher College of Education (Shongwe, 2013). The members of the Executive were; President (Albert Shabangu), the Secretary General (Paul Nhlengethwa) and the Recording Secretary (Elliot Shongwe). After heated discussions, the meeting ended unceremoniously. During the 1800hrs news bulletin from the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Service

During the time when the organisation was banned, the Executive kept on meeting because there were finances and property for teachers that needed to be protected. The SNAT, as an organization, also needed to function, albeit, underground. In its meetings, the Executive of the SNAT also invited non-executive members who were active to get their views regarding the future of the organization which was now banned. These included among others, Meshack 'Kati' Masuku. During this same period, the SNAT President, Albert Shabangu was given a scholarship by the Government of Swaziland to study abroad. This was a covert way of destabilizing and crippling the SNAT by the Government.

The belief was that it would be easy to finish off with SNAT during Albert's absence because he was viewed as the major stumbling block to Governments' dirty tricks. As a militating factor against SNAT, the then SNAT Deputy President Mr. Mahlanzeni Mamba had been swallowed by Likoqo and he was now pushing its agenda of destroying SNAT.

Teachers had to elect another Leader to succeed the Deputy President and that was Kati Masuku who was at the University at that time, pursuing his studies. Masuku then became the acting President for the organization since Albert was now studying abroad.



**Sam Nzima's photo of Hector Pieterse during the 1976 uprising in South Africa [courtesy of Wordpress.com].**

(SBIS) of the same day, the Commissioner of Police made it known to radio listeners that SNAT was banned. However, there is no instrument that was used to pronounce the banning of SNAT by Mthethwa.

The SNAT was banned from using the public media facilities in making any statements or announcements and that made communication even more difficult within SNAT members.



The late Albert Heshane Shabangu who led the SNAT as President during the turbulent times [photo courtesy of UN Multimedia].

The Acting President (Masuku) used to invite those few teachers who owned cars around Manzini, filled their car tanks with fuel and gave them letters to distribute to schools in all Branches in the country and Branch leaders conveyed the message to individual schools for every teacher to know what was to happen (Masuku, 2013). This strategy proved effective for the SNAT as the Liqoqo failed to counteract this strategy.

**Commission of Enquiry to investigate Causes of the 1976-1977 strikes and the unbanning of SNAT**

The effectiveness of the two [2] industrial actions prompted the Government to set up a Commission of Inquiry to investigate causes of the 1976-1977 strikes. This was just a public relations stunt by the Government to make teachers feel as if the industrial actions induced some attitudinal change in the manner in which the Government treated teachers. The overarching objective was to portray the SNAT as a deprived organization to the unsuspecting general public and one which fueled political turbulence. The teachers' complaints based on the

recommendations of the Wamalwa Report were never addressed. The findings of the said commission of enquiry were never publicized. The meeting venue for the Commission was Msamo Wesive. During this same time, there were no SNAT activities such as conferences and meetings and Branches of the SNAT were almost non-existent. The main reason the organization was banned was because it was said to be a political entity, according to the spirit of the 1973 King's Proclamation to the Nation. Six years later (1983) the SNAT was again unbanned amid growing pressure from teachers and wider society to have the organization unbanned. After what could be termed as a profound 'Damascus Road Experience,' the attitude of the Government towards the SNAT changed for the better and there were good relations between the Ministry of Education and the SNAT, (Masuku, 2013). The Ministry in collaboration with the Teachers' Organization began a process of developing a Memorandum of Understanding and a Code of Conduct for all the teachers in Swaziland. As a result, there was a joint establishment of the Teaching Service Regulations in the same year [1983]. During this same period, calls for the recognition of

SNAT grew rapidly. The association recorded a series of victories in many battle fronts and these included the establishment of SNAT Co-operatives Society in 1986 [launched June 28, 1986 at the Trade Fair Grounds in Manzini] to catapult the motives of socio-economic revolution of educators in the country. In actual fact, co-operatives were set up mainly for self-reliance or fallback during Industrial actions. Worth-noting is that the interim Chairman of the Committee was Mr. Albert H. Shabangu, the SNAT President, Secretary as B. Putsoa, Treasurer, F. Mabindza and two [2] Committee Members who were D. Hlatjwayo and Z. Mlambo.

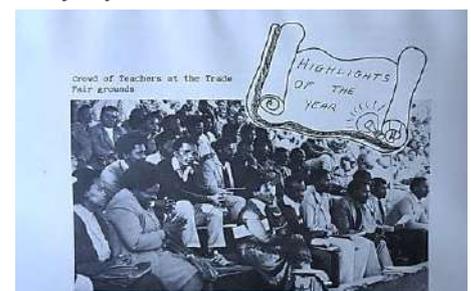


Photo sourced from the 1986 SNAT Eagle

# YEM YEM - A SNAT STALWART GONE TOO SOON

**The SNAT Editorial took time to reflect on the sad and precocious demise of the SNAT Conference Chairperson, Comrade Joseph Sondlo, his indispensable role in the SNAT. Comrade Sondlo was a warrior; a gallant soldier and a fearless cadre who served the Union up to the point of his untimely demise on the 28th of December 2020, reports Mcolisi Motsa.**

The news of Comrade Joseph Sondlo having responded to the Lord's call on the 28th of December 2020, spread like wild fire in the social media space, particularly in SNAT pages. It was breaking news in the literal sense of the word, leaving many a SNAT Member deeply shattered, inconsolable and confounded. An altruistic leader was gone! I recall well the time [0650hrs] the SNAT SG posted in the NEC page that the SNAT Conference Chairperson Joseph Sondlo had fallen in the battlefield, after succumbing to COVID-19 complications. A moment of tranquil struck the page with utmost shock, feebleness and devastation. Since March 2020, when the First Wave of the pandemic reached our shores, so many lives have been lost. The pandemic has devastated so many communities and countries globally, plunging economies, large and small alike, into a cliff.

By February 23, 2021, the country had recorded 647 deaths and 16 839 confirmed cases. According to the WHO Statistics, a total of 112, 116, 627 confirmed cases, 63, 299, 560 recoveries and 2, 485, 601 deaths, were recorded, globally of SARS-CoV-2. Clinical trials of vaccine candidates, as of December 2020, were over 200, with 52 candidate vaccines on human trials. As of now, we have a majority of COVID-19 vaccines that are trying to achieve one thing: immunity to the virus and some might also be able to stop transmission. They do so by stimulating an immune response to an antigen, a molecule found on the virus. Swaziland is yet to see the arrival of such.

When the SNAT SG informed the General Membership [GM] about the demise of the substantive Chairperson of the Conference Committee, he said the SNAT was to lower its flag 'in honour of this down to Earth and respectful and yet knowledgeable pillar of the SNAT.'

"Comrade Sondlo has, during his lifetime, taught both the current and past SNAT Leaders the true essence of leadership in a myriad of ways. He has therefore left an indelible mark in the wall of all times in this regard. As the SNAT, though we mourn his death, we also celebrate a life, well lived. This staunch Leader of the Trade Union Movement shall be deeply remembered by the current generation of trade unionists as a man of few words and more action.

His visibility in the trenches ensured that the struggle for the workers of Swaziland in general and teachers in particular, remained alive," posited the SNAT SG in the statement that sent shockwaves amongst many a member who knew Comrade Sondlo.

Comrade Sondlo, as he was affectionately known, joined the SNAT upon his immediate entry into the teaching service.

As the SNAT Editorial, we went out to search for information about this phenomenal cadre who was a bonafide member of the SNAT as per article 8.2.1 of

**"It is not about the length of life, but about the depth of life." Ralph Waldo Emerson**

the SNAT Constitution and Bye-Laws.

The Deputy Chair of the SNAT Conference Committee, Comrade Lindo Mabuza, when sought for comment on the role of Comrade Sondlo played in the SNAT in his lifetime, expressed his humbleness on the massive responsibility, liking it to "Kwetfweswa emasondvo enyatsi."

Information shared is that Comrade Sondlo started his teaching career at Majembeni Primary School in the period 1989-1992 where he immediately joined the SNAT.

He was instantly elected to serve in a Committee responsible for Sports Management at Branch Level, the then Branch Organizing Committee (BOC). He was also part of a Team that was tasked with building the

Maphiveni Teachers Centre for the Mhlume Branch of the SNAT. He worked with Comrade Phineas Magagula, Comrade Thabani Thwala and Comrade Lencane Hlophe, to mention just a few, improving the conditions of service of teachers at the time.

He was promoted to the post of Deputy Headteacher in 1991-1992 whilst still at Majembeni Primary and later Acting Headteacher at Sidloko Primary in 1993. In 1994, he became the Head Teacher at Madlenya Primary in the Big Bend Branch of the SNAT. He was later transferred to Usuthu Primary School in the Usuthu Branch where he served the school and the Branch from 1995 until his untimely death on the 28th of December 2020.

Whilst serving at the Usuthu Branch, his passion for the SNAT was hugely manifest. Like a true servant, he was always visible on the ground in SNAT Activities from Branch Level to National Level. This earned him the trust of teachers in his Branch. It was in the year 2000 that he got elected to the position of Treasurer from the period 2000 -

2004. During his tenure in Office, he was known for "kunsinywa sikhwama," as he would not allow the Committee to spend willy-nilly on Branch coffers.



**The late Comrade Joseph "Yem Yem" Sondlo**



Yem Yem amongst protesters in Mbabane on the 25th of September 2019 [Courtesy of SNAT Media].

As a Headteacher, he availed his school's premises for Branch Meetings, free of charge. Such is unprecedented considering the fact that most schools, led by SWAPA, are seen as personal farms by the Administration. Comrade Sondlo never fell victim to the trap of thinking that being appointed a leader of a school meant promotion to Boss-hood. He was down to Earth and believed in role definition and role separation.

It is in that attitude that in 2008, Comrade Sondlo was again elected Branch Treasurer for the second time, serving for four [4] years: 2008-2012. From 2012-2016, he served in the National Conference Committee as Recording Secretary under the Chairmanship of Vusi Sukati. He was a hard worker. Despite his physical stature, he was always seen "rolling" up and down carrying conference material.

One of the Leaders we consulted on Comrade Sondlo, Comrade Pat Mamba remembers him as an "ever jovial, and a straight talker, a lover of the SNAT, always willing to assist his Branch-Usuthu." Comrade Sondlo was a dedicated Christian in the Anglican Church, and, as told by his grantee-Mr. Magongo-a preacher in the Anglican Church, Sondlo had indicated an intention to go for Bible Studies, in preparation to take up the task of preaching the Good News.

In the year 2016, he took a break and went to further his studies at SANU. In the year 2018, he bounced back, standing for elections and subsequently became the Chairperson of the Conference Committee, a committee that was yet to deliver organising a single Conference. He was still serving in this Committee when he met his death. Comrade Sondlo was a capacitated cadre; a product of study circles, a membership empowerment exercise funded by the Danish government.



Now and again, he was tasked by the leadership of Albert Shabangu and that of Kati Masuku, to lead and facilitate in study circles.

When engaging the SNAT Recording Secretary [RS] Comrade Emmanuel Dlamini on the essence of the Study Circles Programme, he recalled that, "Comrade Sondlo was an active participant during these sessions. We were the second trench to benefit from same, following closely the likes of Comrade Saulus, Comrade Ntombi, Comrade Sibanda Dan et al. The content was founded on the mandate of SNAT from a global perspective. It also dealt extensively with law reforms, more emphasis on women's rights." The RS elaborated further that the, "global perspective was influenced by active participation of the SNAT in the world confederation of teaching professionals. The global organizations also came for the SNAT during her ban by the state and the programmes gained momentum after the ban was lifted. Trade unionism as part of the theory and practice was also taught with

"He influenced me to join the organization with his ability in social character construction by grooming democratic and sound Leadership. The teachers from his school can attest to that. He was recruited by Dr. Phineas Magagula to join the SNAT. Now and again, he encouraged that the SNAT should mould leaders for positions so that they lead the organization with a clear vision and direction."

As a loyal servant of the SNAT, Comrade Sondlo would now and again encourage young Educators to join the SNAT in order to improve their quality of life. As the SNAT Editorial, we take this moment to appreciate and acknowledge the assistance from the SNAT SG, Secretary of the SNAT Conference Committee, the Deputy Chair of the SNAT Conference, SNAT National RS, TUCOSWA Treasurer and NASOWECO Secretary as we worked tirelessly to assemble this article.

We know that Comrade Sondlo is not gone, he is resting for we believe that the measure of any human being is not what one says, but one does on behalf of others. Writing a eulogy about Sondlo will never be sufficient.

In the words of the trade union movement's anthem, Solidarity Forever, 'we shall build a new world from the ashes of the old.' We will honour his memory by continuing our struggle for improved conditions of service of teachers in the country. The trade union anthem continues to say, "we shall build a new world from the ashes of the old." Indeed, Comrade Sondlo was a man who had such a profound effect on the lives of each and every one of us: a quiet man, definitely not an exhibitionist. His intellect, his energy, and his enthusiasm are what made him who he was. He was bright, logical and systematic in his thinking. He was always willing to share his ideas and thoughts. Many of us found him to be a splendid person with an immense heart. His measured tread, his analytical evaluation and assessment of any problem was very impressive. If that description, however, suggests that he was detached-nothing could be further from the truth! Some people come into our lives and touch us briefly like the brush of a butterfly's wing. A few come into our lives and leave an indelible imprint on our inner consciousness. Sondlo had that effect on all those that he met.

Sondlo's strategy for living his life and doing his job was encapsulated by the French thinker, Voltaire, who said;

"It is far better to preserve a kindly silence than to speak an uncharitable truth."

**We salute our leader.**



The Notice in the Newspaper about the death of Comrade Joseph Sondlo [Courtesy photo].

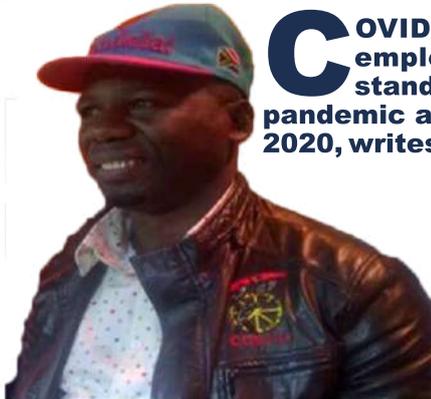
inclination to the then SFTU."

The Federation's Treasurer, Comrade Patrick Mamba divulged that Comrade Sondlo was politically inclined.

He said, "Sondlo was a card-carrying member of the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress [NNLC], always pushing me to inform him of all meetings of the NNLC extended Executive Committee: a committee made up of 60 members, elected to serve the party, and a group from which the National Working Committee is elected."

Comrade Sondlo longed for multi-party democracy, and a new Swaziland under multi party pluralism. One of the current leaders he groomed include Lucky Mthombo who is the incumbent Secretary for the NASOWECO, Lucky Mthombo, described Comrade Sondlo as a Leader who "had a high level of tolerance and respected opinions from all educators, although he had vast experience in both the teaching profession and trade union. He advised with a smile because he loved teachers and our organization, with all his heart." Mthombo revealed that Comrade Sondlo nurtured him, starting at the level of persuading him to take leadership responsibility in Sports Committees where he played a pivotal role in developing extra-curriculum activities.

# Compliments of the **New Year** to all **Swaziland workers!**



**Ntai Norman Mampane**

COSATU Shopsteward Magazine Editor and Social Media Copywriter

**C** OVID-19 has taken its toll on workers globally. From issues of employments rights, lay-offs, mental health and issues of OSHA standards and directives, workers have been on the receiving end of this pandemic as announced by the World Health Organisation [WHO] in February 2020, writes Comrade Ntai Norman Mampane from the COSATU.

We still prefer to use Western made remedies to cure our people and claiming that our forefathers and foremother's concoctions are unscientific, but how long should we continue to disregard their usefulness in certain life-threatening situations?

**T** he year 2021 has not started on a good note as many working-class communities have experienced the most traumatic situations of burying their loved ones during the festive season, especially losing breadwinners in most of these households.

*Ukudabuka okusuka enhliziyweni kuzo zonke izinhliziy eziphukile njengoba belahlekelwe abathandekayo babo. Ekuphakameni kwelanga, nasekushoneni kwelanga, sizobakhumbula.*

*Ukuthula makube kinina!*



It disheartening in Swaziland to learn on the 7th February that a 'total death of 607 people', were registered which resulted in the total number of Covid-19 cases to reach 16 234 in a space of time. This is tragic!

The outbreak of Covid-19 has not spared workers from losing their jobs in various sectors of the country and elsewhere across the globe. Tackling Coronavirus is a trade union issue in every workplace or community as it has imposed the 'new normal', in our lives! Prevention is better than cure!

The public debate all Swazis must engage in is the usability and reliability of our African remedies to fight against pandemic such as the Coronavirus.

Putting on a mask every second, keeping social distancing, washing hands regularly, remote working, are some of the new practices we are forced to adhere to as a result of the announcement by the World Health Organization. All these health protocols and/or regulations have tampered with our way of life, how we bury our loved ones has changed drastically, performing and adherence to cultural rituals before burying and during funerals have changed! The worst element is the deepening of hunger in the already poverty-stricken families due to loss of income.

Swaziland has a population of 1,167,416 citizens [According to the Worldmeter as of February 2021 of the latest United Nations Data] and an unemployment rate of 21,97%. Youth unemployment continues to rise, with no immediate hope to change the situation!

Workers must rise to organize the unemployed people to demand jobs and all unorganized workers to demand a living wage and decent work now!

Progressive and organized trade unions in the education sector are critical to empower learners as future citizens to master in the book and in practice all these survival tactics and strategies to save our communities from extinction. The pandemic has changed our world in ways we could hardly have imagined. Working remotely is a new challenge, with no labour legislation available in most companies to

## WORKERS' BILL OF RIGHTS DURING COVID-19 CRISIS



regulate such an 'arrangement', should not put workers in a disadvantaged position!

In this conjuncture, we are still living bitterly with the declaration of Covid-19 as a 'pandemic' by the World Health Organization [WHO] and workers in Swaziland must dissect how did labour respond across the globe?

Was it enough on the regulations and on issues of compliance? What we could have done better? What are the lessons to be learnt? The most depressing scandal during Coronavirus lockdown was about corruption related to the personal protective equipment, non-payment of danger allowance to the frontline and essential workers, and in other countries across the globe, the most down-trodden experiencing the undeserving individuals benefiting from COVID-19 Unemployment Insurance Fund Benefits, with many poor workers forced into poverty and destitution.

This has to stop! And it must be stopped by the most organize detachment of the working class, the workers. This must be exposed by all progressive trade unions and the judiciary must have guts to hold all persons accountable! Let's engage, organise, propagate our views and defend our only weapon-Labour Power Now!



# THE SNAT EAGLE

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

P.O. BOX 1575, Manzini | Phone: 2505 2603/2505 6267 | Email: [motsamcolisi@gmail.com](mailto:motsamcolisi@gmail.com)

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### Gender equality: An Issue of Global Significance

DEAR EDITOR

The need for gender equality is one of the relevant and fundamental factors that need addressing in a global context and manner. I believe women empowerment has far-reaching benefits for the world.

Women have proven to be great leaders, globally, yet they are disempowered at a young age especially in the developing world. Take for instance, eSwatini where there are still cases whereby young girls are lured into marriages, held back from attending school because their education doesn't matter to that of boys. It's the perception that girls are lesser than boys, women lesser than men. While much has been done to alleviate this, there is still quite a way to go.

Women across the globe are naturally good at nurturing and caring. I believe that is one of the most crucial aspects that lack in the world organizational structure and system. The United Nations [UN] has been working hard to improve the global awareness about women empowerment; the fight against sexual violence imposed on women, the United Nations [UN] has been greatly involved creating women empowerment projects and programs.

I still believe the developing world still has a long way to go on this issue of gender equality also because of cultural barriers and norms that hinder the movement of women empowerment and social welfare reforms. In this Covid-19 era, under strict lockdowns and restrictions whereby men and women are forced to be together, under the same roof for a prolonged period of time, there have been alarming rates of reports of abuse, gender-based violence. Men still are failing to embrace the fact that women are their equals and deserve to be treated like ones.

Rates of sexual violence against women remain high and on top of that, deaths of women in the hands of men. How can the world then overcome this global crisis which keeps on setting us back and hampers progress on obstacles to global prosperity? I still think that men are the ones to take a step and a stand and say NO to gender inequality and say YES to gender equality. Men also need to shame and name offenders, regardless of their friendship status with them because it begins and ends with you and I. I AM THE DIFFERENCE.

**Thami Magongo [The Poet]**

### LUBOMBO FOR CORONAVIRUS

DEAR EDITOR

China was seeking for a courts approval to kill over 20 000 corona virus patients to avoid further spreads. This was because of many reasons including the loss of health workers since it was said that at least 20 workers are infected with this deadly virus each day. All these measures were done to protect the left descendants from being wiped away by this killer virus. am not saying Eswatini should kill those infected by Corona virus am only trying to make Emaswati to understand that corona is real and fatal. Since last year the ministry of health was reasoning with people to stop the in and out of the country, media houses showing up some serious consequences of this so-called corona virus, but still there were those people who were turning a deaf ear to it, now here we are.

We have it in Eswatini and our poor government showed them the Lubombo referral hospital. We are all in their case now. The 'tifa ngamvunyinye' saying has come to reality in the Lubombo region. The people now live in fear because of people failing to listen to simple instructions.

The sad part of it is that the hospital is not ready at all, just the nurses and their flue injections. They don't have even protective clothes to protect themselves. It was said that the nurses were uncomfortable and afraid of attending the corona virus patient, do you blame them? All the shame is going to our poor government that even failed to train these vulnerable nurses. These nurses who take care of coronavirus patients have families to go to at the end of the day. If the nurses are at high risks, how much more their families? This is really not fair for the nurses there since they vowed to save lives of fellow Swazis but this time if they can take their lives, I cannot blame them. This is very serious.

I wonder why the government of Eswatini chose to put the corona virus patients at Siteki without even communicating with the residents there. This is a clear indication that they don't care about our health there, we don't have hospitals; only Good Shepherd, but they decided to take the nothing to corona virus. Who would have thought that this huge and massive hospital would bring dead to our beloved Lubombo region? We were happy to know our government was doing a good thing for us, little did we know that our ululating was for Corona virus. Sometimes development brings disaster since if we didn't have this hospital, we wouldn't be corona scare.

I really sympathize with you people of Lubombo region, the despised Region of Eswatini, nothing good there. The roads are disastrous and injurious. No jobs for the youth. On top of that misery, our government is adding coronavirus. I lament with you guys. Keep trusting on God Jehovah and our Ancestors, we shall live. The Bible says "the just will live by faith." We take this to action. May our Great Ancestors too intervene to this awkward situation. Remember to follow the safety precautions!

**By Goodman Natureboy Maziya [Son of the Soil]**



# THE SNAT EAGLE

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## Teachers too deserve better

### DEAR EDITOR

From the very basics of understanding in my heart, there is no use to walk about in the outskirts of veracity about the modus operandi now assumed by many of the citizens in the kingdom when choosing professions. Teaching is considered as a profession for rejects and those who study it are of low cognitive maturity. With this bickering, rumor mongering and a dime a dozen unholy assumption at hand, the reputation of the profession is, in broad day-light, dragged in the mud. Was it not clearly elucidated that teaching is the mother of all professions? I do not care which profession one is in because even employers, them too, went under the stupendous hands of a teacher.

To begin with, let me affirm that this conspiracy is as a result of the number of occurrences whereby teachers have been underrated, pined away in despair and implicated in the extent of being paid peanuts. Consequently, some teachers have been caught in the wrong side of the law and reprimanded. Not only had some been incarcerated but also some resorted into suicide. Most often than not, a lot of teachers indulge in a lot of shenanigans which swerves the profession's best known cliché; teaching is a noble profession. I wonder if God is ever going to send a redeemer to redeem this noble profession in such a slanderous defamation. It is really unbearable to be a teacher in such times in the Kingdom! With that having been uttered, I with great conviction, categorically and unequivocally contend that teaching is still the best profession. It is so interesting that so much public debates centre on celebrities, athletes and even politicians are serving as role models. The veracity of this enigma lies on the fact that out of their own home, one of the biggest role models in a young person's life is standing at the front of the classroom.

Teachers are well-known for their ability and capability not only to impact knowledge but also to nurture and uphold good morals among children from the very debut years of their education. Through the vast knowledge in their disposal, they have produced intellectuals, socially oriented individuals who know the best way to interact with other people and the environment. They groomed optimistic leaders that are brimming with confidence to lead this beautiful kingdom of Swaziland with a bunch of heeding skills, values and wisdom. Is this not a trillion-dollar reason not to treat teachers with contempt? They too, deserve better!

Submerged in a world of terror and desperation, how many times teachers had gone on strike? With some fearing that they would be destroying the values they cherished, even though they question the point of holding those values in such a cruel world to them. But what else could they do? The intensity of the standard of living had brought them to this crossroads. And in a way, the stench of false promises, of forbidden things, is all they now do not care about. The society and government should uprightly cut teachers some slack; being critical to them is doing no good instead the reputation teachers have worked hard for, from neck-to-neck and toe-to-toe is slowly but surely decaying. As a result, we have teachers who are no longer enjoying this soul exonerating profession but because they hold no other alternatives, they find themselves stuck in teaching. This brings the acumen of this profession's reputation wholly-down to most people! Teachers really deserve better!

I always have been heebie-jeebies when I contemplate on the fact that today in Swaziland we have trained and qualified teachers who are working

on contracts and a countless pool of them are under the delusion of unemployment. What about those who are now on training? Despite that we are all ruffled by the hike of unemployment in the Kingdom, teaching has been presented not appetizing as other professions do. In such times, a lot of talks particularly on the pessimists' side of view have seen a number of both teachers and aspiring teachers living in shambles as they are skeptical of what the future has in store for them. This is for sure unbearable! Would they ever get employment? I just cannot imagine it. Surely, there are ways government can implement to curb the pangs and ebbs of life endured by teachers.

In spite of all, the nation needs to amalgamate and support the teaching profession. We already have structures advocating for the importance of teachers and teaching in the country. Surely, they have never rested to show the country and the world at large that without teachers, the entire world is in a big stake. To name but one structure, there is Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) whose aim is to strive to improve the professional, socio-economic status of teachers, enhance collective bargaining for teachers and encourage maximum participation and provision of quality education to learners. This is one of the structures in the kingdom that is putting endless effort to see the world smiling on teachers and other not aforementioned but obvious structures. There is much effort needed to be put forth to mitigate the challenges faced by teachers in such trying times. Remember, an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. Teachers need outmost attention!

**Wakhe Simelane**

# FROM SINGING IN CHURCH TO BECOMING A RECOGNIZED MUSICIAN-WE TALK TO SONGSTRESS PRUDENCE LEMONADE



**Mhlanga Prudence**  
"aka" Prudence Lemonade

Songwriter/Songbird/MC/Events Promoter

**SNAT MEDIA [SM]:** Good day Prudence Lemonade.

**Prudence Lemonade [PL]:** Good day Editor.

**SM:** Thank you for taking your time to engage with us. We are pleased to have you here at the SNAT Media. Kindly tell us, who is Prudence Lemonade?

**PL:** Thank you so much for having me. I am a young enthusiastic artist, a songwriter and an events Master of Ceremony, all the way from the shady rural areas in the Lubombo region. I am also doing my second year Bachelor of Science in Consumer Science Education at the University of ESwatini-Luyengo Campus.

**SM:** Hmm...that's awesome! You are an artist [vocalist], MC, Swati Queen, student at UNESWA; quite a lot of things. How do you juggle around and manage your time?

**PL:** Uhm... basically it is quite a lot for a young person like me but because I'm in love with what I do, I am able to pull through each and every one of these successfully. I try to focus on School during weekdays, then on weekends I work on my music and looking out for better ways to upgrade my talent.

**SM:** Wow! That's mouthful! How did you discover your talent as a vocalist? Tell us more too about Climax Studios Eswatini and their relationship with you as a professional musician.

**PL:** I actually started singing at a very tender age at church, but because my voice was considered 'big' and unique (that's how I see it) they didn't notice me, basically they did not like it.

Then when I started my first year at varsity, I was helping some artists to write their songs and that's when I knew that I was born for it. Then January 2020 God Sent the Climax Studios team to come to the rescue and pull me out. They are basically a media company and so they brought me in and we started recording.

**SM:** In July you dropped a single, 'Happiness' which attracted more than 3 000 downloads in three [3] months of its release. What was the message and how did it feel to receive such an overwhelming response?

**PL:** I don't want to lie. I was a little bit overwhelmed by such response from the people mainly because I was a new baby in the music industry. As you know that it is very difficult for artists to get recognition in the Kingdom and for me it was a great achievement.

**SM:** Tell us about the concept of hosting an online competition where Bhekumuzi received E500, a branded shirt and a special feature in your upcoming video. What was the idea behind the competition?

**PL:** Basically, we wanted to create a hype around the song, for people to pay attention that I was breaking in the music industry. The theme was to create a fan base and I am so grateful to everyone who participated in the competition.

**SM:** The song 'Stop Violence' received over 2000 downloads in 14 days of its release. What did such response trigger in you as an artist?

**PL:** Whenever we release songs, we're releasing them for the people to listen, grab a certain message and use that in their daily lives. This is to say that out there, people are beginning to take notice to what I am bringing to the table and that it's what keeps me going.

**SM:** For some time, you have been a champion of ending all forms of violence [with particular focus on Gender Based, Child Abuse] in our society. Tell us more about that campaign. What inspired you to stand against this social scourge?

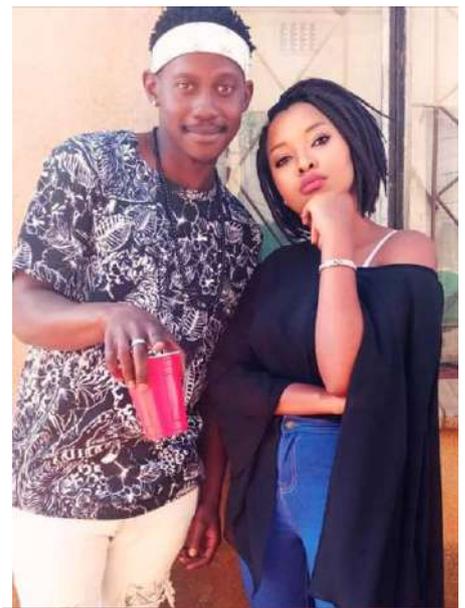
**PL:** You know, waking up almost every day to news of killings, Rape stories, Victims who have committed suicide because they were abused was just too much for me so I said "enough is enough, I have to do something about this." And then I wrote this song to take action against Gender based Violence.

**SM:** In your opinion, what is it that needs to be done to end violence in our society? Do you think stakeholders have done enough to fight this social cancer? Do you think GBV should be declared a National Disaster too as championed by other entities such as SWAGAA and One Billion Rising?

**PL:** The thing is that people get abused and fail to speak up so then the perpetrators gain momentum by continuing to abuse more and more people, so if we can speak up, report and get the abusers arrested we can live in a better SOCIETY, LET'S BREAK THE SILENCE! I don't think stakeholders are doing enough because instead of the numbers going down, they are up. And of course, I do think it should be declared as a National disaster because things tend to be getting out of hand, people are dying like flies and this has to be put to a stop.

**SM:** Tell us more too about your collaboration with Diba Diba and Ntsetse.

**PL:** Those are one of the wonderful artists in the kingdom, I drew them in the collaboration because I felt that they can be able to bring in the emotions that were needed in the song and they did.



Prudence with DIBA-DIBA on #STOPVIOLENCE Song [Courtesy of Climax Studios].



The STOP VIOLENCE CD [courtesy photo]



The collaboration in producing the MBANGAZITHA song last year, 2020 [Courtesy photo].



The latest project, released by Prudence Lemonade on Valentine's Day in 2021 [Courtesy photo].

**SM:** I understand you use different platforms to promote your music and engage your fans. Which platforms do you use and which one you think makes you connect with your fan base?

**PL:** For a start I have been promoting and distributing my music for free. I mainly use Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and the music is uploaded on YouTube and Skheto.com. I feel like people on Twitter and Facebook have been paying more attention to my music.

**SM:** Well, that's pretty awesome. I always notice you promoting events, small and medium businesses in your platforms. What triggers that selflessness in you to promote others?

**PL:** I am a person that wants to see everybody getting to where they want to be and I feel like I have a social media as platform and I use that platform I have to promote what others are offering. It is what basically everybody should be doing especially Emaswati because we are small sector, we should use what we have to promote one another.

**SM:** Let me ask this question. Last year you released a song titled 'Mhangazitha.' What was the inspiration behind the song and when you reflect, how did it perform in the charts?

**PL:** That was a Campaign by the 'KAGOGO FOUNDATION' which is a Foundation that pays for school fees for less privileged children founded by Prince Sivandzisemakhosi. About 9 artists were featured on the track. The mandate was to raise funds for the organisation by selling the song online, it was uploaded on all online digital stores and people can stream it. The song is about King Mswati III and what he has done since he took over from King Sobhuza II.

**SM:** The music industry in Swaziland is hectic unlike in other countries such as South Africa. How do you cope? And what is it that you think needs to be done to promote local talent to the level where emaswati fully embrace and support them?

**PL:** I feel like the government should take the Art Industry at large serious. They should make laws and pirating of music. Musicians should be paid for playing their songs on TV and radio. And I feel like as artists we lack financial help, exposure and motivation. We need stakeholders to come to the rescue because otherwise we will be up coming artists for the rest of our miserable lives.

**SM:** Hmmm...where do you see yourself in ten [10] from now as a musician?

**PL:** I want to put the flag of the country up the mountain by making quality music that will be certified and approved internationally. I would also love to establish an art school to help young people realise their talent and help them polish their art. I would really love to see Eswatini artists get recognition locally and internationally.

**SM:** Well, we thank you for your time to talk to us. We wish all the best in your career as a professional musician.

**PL:** Thank you so much for having me.



Mr. Sithembiso Dlamini

Wear Your Graduation Gown Coordinator and Founder

## WEAR YOUR GRADUATION GOWN CAMPAIGN-AN INTERVIEW WITH FOUNDER, MR. SITHEMBISO DLAMINI

**T**his Edition we took our time to engage with a phenomenal young man who is all out to inspire the youth through academic excellence and other initiatives that support young people in communities through the Wear Your Gown Campaign. The movement has a clear mandate, to eliminate Academic Discrimination in the country. The brains behind all this is a graduate too: Mr Sithembiso Dlamini

The WYGG mission is to stimulate the worth of education across all levels regardless of faculties of speciality among the African Youth. The goal is so that we eradicate poverty. I have said it and I still say that the only time a person would fight effectively with poverty is when he/she is educated as an individual, same applies with a Nation. A Nation with more educated individuals becomes rich because of this thing called Knowledge Economy. Every economy is founded on knowledge.

**SM:** Hmm...the other day I saw you speak in the African Landscape as a panelist representing Swaziland. What was the whole thing about and how did you feel being there?

**SD:** World Bank usually commemorates the End Poverty day annually in the Month of October. This past year 2020 they themed it around Covid-19 and the Youth from African countries were the panellists. It happened on the 27th of the Month of October. I will tell you now Sir, this was an amazing experience. First from being selected among the so many young people, doing amazing things in the country. It really warmed my heart. It means my work is being watched. I spoke on the 'WORLD BANK END POVERTY DAY 2020.' Woooooow! I still don't believe it happened. I still thank God even today on that opportunity! One of my biggest highlights of 2020.

**SM:** Wow! We saw you launch a number of campaigns and initiatives this year such as '#DonateOldBooks,' '#PastPapersWithSthe,' '#PadNyakeniSchoolGirl' and '#NyakeniBoyChildLisango' etc. Tell us about all these initiatives and what they intend to achieve?

**SD:** Again, what a question! Ha haaaaaa! I don't believe I do all these things, I really don't. I will arrange them like this:

### 1. Donate Old Text Books

Often times we blame teachers for bad results on students especially those in external classes but forget that if students have no books, they cannot perform well. Here I collect old (sometimes new) books that are no longer used to donate to needy students mostly in rural schools and communities. I deal with students every day. As I worked with them under WYGG, I discovered a huge vacuum of text books shortages. I was triggered by those who are restarting and the ones going to Emlalatini. Many needy students have been helped, to this day I'm still serving more even those at tertiary level. They get books for free. I am now known as Malume Books by the young beneficiaries of #DonateOldTextBooks he he heee!

**S** **SNAT MEDIA [SM]:** Good day Nkhosi. We appreciate the time to engage with us today in your busy schedule. We hope you are good.

**SITHEMBISO DLAMINI [SD]:** Good day to you Mvulane as you represent he he...! Compliments of the year 2021 Sir!

**SM:** Compliments Nkhosi! Now, Mr. Dlamini, tell us: who is Sithembiso Dlamini? What is it that drives him up each day he wakes up?

**SD:** I am a Servant Visionary Leader from Nyakeni a rural place in the Manzini region. Growing up poor inspired me to wake up every day to do what I'm doing not only for me but for the people of this country especially the marginalised Needy Children and Youth in rural communities, especially those in Primary and High School ages.

**SM:** Hmm...that's selflessness of the highest order! We've seen your sterling work in different forums. Tell us in particular about the Wear Your Graduation Gown [WYGG] initiative. How did this come about and the mandate for same?

**SD:** WYGG is a Youth Academic organization I started late 2017. When I first had the WYGG vision, I saw only an event for graduates where they will come on wearing their gowns, Aspiring Graduates (Tertiary) and Students (Primary and High School) come on their uniforms, come together to celebrate education and get inspiration, but as it grew inside me it broadened up to become a fully-fledged Academic NGO with an Academic Mandate.

**SM:** Wow! Sounds mind-blowing but the question remains: why gowns?

**SD:** Gowns are not just gowns to me and the WYGG community. They have become a tool of motivation. We speak less and they make the loudest of noise in the minds of the students. They create a long-lasting illusion in the minds of our audience the students and the uneducated to say, 'I want to wear it one day.' We create the Education Hunger through those gowns so that even someone who was thinking of divorcing education envies the gowns and continue with school.

**SM:** Hmm...that's thoughtful of you Nkhosi. You're doing an amazing job. Now, what specific activities has WYGG executed and what was the feedback?

**SD:** Yoooooh, Mvulane! I don't know if I will remember all of them but I will try. WYGG has hosted:

- The WYGG Academic Day 2018
- The WYGG Academic Day 2019
- Visited a number on Rural Schools, Churches and Communities including One Orphanage on motivation Duties
- WYGG has two [2] powerful programs:
  1. The WYGG Accept Your Results Program (To reduce number of suicide due to results hopelessness, launched in December 2019)
  2. The WYGG Share Prospectus Program (Launched in February 2020)
- WYGG has been in all TV, Radio and News Papers in the land Helping students

NB: Covid-19 disturbed our plans to host our third annual event in 2020



Wear Your Graduation Gown Event [Courtesy photo].

## 2. Past Papers With Sthe

This one is fully inspired by the struggles that are faced by students right now due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. I looked around as a visionary and I knew that I must do something. I went to the Exams Council of Eswatini [ECESWA] to look for some of the past papers that were not in their website. Downloaded all that were there and created WhatsApp groups where Students, Parents, Teachers and Guardians come in through a link and request for free past question papers including marking schemes. This one is the most difficult initiative that I have ever started but it has helped thousands because I now have about 7 groups. Form 2s and 4s around the country called me and complained that I'm side-lining them, hence I had to create them groups where I upload papers.

## 3. Pad Nyakeni School Girl

I do not want to be long with this one because it is at community level. I adopted 3 of the schools (Malunge High, Seven Holy Founders and Salukazi Primary Schools) in my rural community where I donate pads to keep the girl child in school. We know what nature brought unto them. There are always pads in those schools since January 2020.

## 4. Nyakeni Boy Child Lisango

This one is for the boys around my community in their school ages. Here I am trying to raise a Crime, and Drugs free generation of boys from my community. Boys who will be responsible Boyfriends, Fathers, Uncles and husbands to their wives in future. I believe that the best time to build the future is now. A GBV free community of boys is a must for me. Boys health is one of the aspects we will look into and how the boys can make a living through businesses. They are serving the purpose of Community development. I won't wait for anyone to build a better Nation. I will do that which is due to me also.

**SM:** Are there people you can identify who have added value to your life and the myriad of campaigns you have around?

**SD:** Yooooooh! I owe that to most of the people of this country. A lot of them, I really can't single out one or two [2]. I am a product of the people. My work is supported by the people. All I can do is to thank them. From the WYGG Leaders, to Members, those who donate books, Pads sometimes Clothes for the needy. My Mentors, the Media, etc. I am a work in progress by and for the people of this country.

**SM:** Well, I can see your vision is quite huge S'the. What is it that you think is the fundamental role of the youth in the country? How can young people take advantage of the plethora of opportunities around them in 2021 and beyond?

**SD:** The role of the youth is to save the Nation. We owe our grannies and the children of this country a saved Nation from poverty as the Youth. I'm not sure if we have enough opportunities, I won't comment on that one. All I can say is that let us [the youth] create our own opportunities Mvulane. We are in a very bad space of high corruption rates from Government down to smaller groups but then as you say there are still opportunities abroad, especially with regard to education. People should tap into those and make them count the most.

**SM:** You were on SBIS 1 on Thursday, 7 January 2021. Tell us about that interview you had with Veli Simelane.

**SD:** First Radio interview in 2021, such a good time we had with Umnguni. I always enjoy radio. I was talking about my initiatives and campaigns that seek to better the lives of Emaswati.



WYGG at Malunge High in 2019 [Courtesy photo].

**SM:** I want to ask you this question Mr. Dlamini. Do you think the government is doing enough in transforming the education system in the country, towards attaining SDG 4 in 2030? If not, which areas do you think needs strengthening and how?

**SD:** I am not going to lie to you Editor. We are far from that and I blame it to the leadership of the country. SDG4 is about quality education. We are not embracing education as a priority especially at government level looking at how things are done from tertiary down. I am really not impressed. As a youth leader within the Education unit on full time, I think Government should consider treating teachers with respect. I am not saying this because I'm on a SNAT Platform, no. I know their long-time crisis of CoLA and under-staffed in schools, to name but a few. Teaching is the Mother of all professions. If these educators are not well taken care of where are we going to get quality professionals of the future? We need futuristic leaders to deal with this one here. No quality treatment for teachers, no quality education.

Another key thing to look into is the issue of Grade 0. The quality must begin there.

As for tertiaries, there is too much that needs to be done. There is too much unhealthy noise between students and the government. This noise is way too old, started back in the days. The fact that it is still there means we are not improving. 2030 is in 9 years from now. I can tell you now, with this noise we will never make it to SDG4 for the next century. Still at tertiary, I really do not understand why we still have tertiary institutions that allow hand written assignments when we talk of SDG4 by 2030 and most of these institutions are owned by the government. What a Shame! Still, I blame this to the leadership. Like I said, there is a lot that still needs to be done especially at tertiary.

A new study on the demands of the labour market needs to be done. Mvulane, we have more than 60 tertiary institutions that are registered and accredited by ESHEQ, are they all worth a thing for a small country as ours? I wonder!

**SM:** Mouthful indeed! What message of hope do you have for young people out there this year [2021] who are looking up to you for a better future? Is there any hope out of the pandemic [COVID-19]?

**SD:** My dear brothers. And sisters, first know that I Love you. You are the reason I resigned from work just to serve you for a better future of our country. Let us not lose ourselves even though it seems like we all perishing. I may not be sure when but I assure you that Covid-19 will soon pass too. This pandemic is not going to be here forever. Hold firm and strong in Faith knowing that nothing happens behind God.

**SM :** Well, we can talk until December 2021. I take this time to wish you all the best in all your future endeavours. Your dedication is unmatched. Thank you for your time.

**SD :** My pleasure Mvulane, thank you for having me on this great platform. Best wishes on the year 2021 Sir!!!!



# THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM CENTRE'S MANDATE AND COMPRESSION OF THE 2021 SCHOOLS' CURRICULUM



**Musa T. Hlophe**

The Director at the NCC

## Introduction

The National Curriculum Centre (NCC) is a department in the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). The fundamental mandate of the department is to interpret national development policies as contained in policy documents and reports (National Constitution, National Development Plans, Review Commissions, etc.), and then formulate objectives within the system. The department conducts research, produces educational programmes, develops instructional materials, trial tests and evaluates them for use in the general education system of Eswatini, that is, the school system. This is done for continuous improvement of educational programmes of the general education system of the country, in particular, pre-school, primary and secondary school education. NCC also provides guidance in implementation of curriculum reforms and reviews for the country.

### Key curriculum issues

NCC developed Eswatini National Curriculum Framework for general education which was published in 2018. This document constitutes the foundation on which the reforms needed to implement a 21st Century curriculum. This framework gave birth to the Competency Based Education (CBE) curriculum. This is an approach where achievement is measured on competencies and core skills that are demonstrated by the learner.

The development of the National Curriculum Framework provides a basis on which the country could develop its own curricula to address its specific needs based on identified standards.

Subsequently, in 2019, the MoET introduced the CBE curriculum in all primary schools in Eswatini starting with Grade 1, after piloting and advocating for it in 2018. In 2020, CBE curriculum progressed to Grade 2 and shall continue to the other grade levels in the following years. According to the curriculum framework, the primary school cycle at present contains three [3] phases: Foundation Phase, Grade 0-2; middle Primary Phase, Grade 3-4; and Upper Primary Phase; Grade 5-7. The secondary cycle has two [2] phases: that is, Junior Secondary Phase; Grade 8-10, and Senior Secondary Phase; Grade 11-12 and qualifications beyond Grade 12.

### Progress on CBE

The CBE introduced in 2019 will see the restructuring of existing programmes like having Expressive Arts instead of Practical Arts and Technology, Health and Physical Education and General Studies. There is also an introduction of new programmes into schools during the Middle Primary Phase in 2021. These are French and Information Communication and Technology (ICT) in line with the Curriculum Framework. French will be taught as an optional/elective subject. ICT should be offered in schools with proper equipment and appropriately qualified teachers. The benefit of adding a foreign language in this phase is to equip learners with creativity, divergent thinking, and improved listening and memory skills. The early introduction of ICT lays a foundation for basic skills that are essential for the present and the future.

### Teaching syllabi development at secondary school level

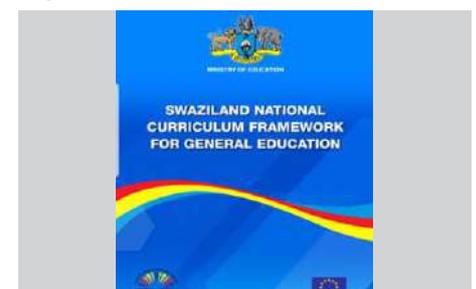
The NCC has successfully developed the CBE primary curriculum guidelines for all phases and have been distributed to all schools in Eswatini. The NCC is now in the process of developing CBE secondary schools

teaching syllabi following the proper consultations and research protocols required. Some secondary schools' syllabi developed or in the development processes include: Business Studies, English Language, Agriculture and History.

The development of these teaching syllabi embraces a localised curriculum to allow more meaningful and relevant learning. A relevant curriculum content is pivotal in providing quality education. At Senior Secondary level, the teaching syllabi are aligned with Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) to ensure that instruction meets and exceeds minimum quality international

### Covid-19 and curriculum

In March 2020, the on-going Covid-19 pandemic slowed down the country of Eswatini. This resulted in the temporary closure of all schools thus disturbing the smooth continuation of curriculum implementation. Form 5s were recalled in July and later joined by the other classes who were to sit for external examination. The internal classes remained closed for the rest of the year, and these were hit hardest in terms of lagging behind with their curriculum; hence, MoET's stance is that in 2021 there should be normal progression for all learners. The above has resulted in NCC and subject panels engaging in a process of compressing the curriculum content to cover for the lost time and disruptions caused by the pandemic for the next academic year 2021. Teachers will be oriented on the new strategies through Training of Trainers (ToTs) who will train all teachers in their various regions/clusters.



*The 60-page Eswatini National Curriculum Framework for General Education.*



Lot Vilakati

Siteki Top Secretary

# Teachers are not Machines

As headteachers are working towards reopening schools, preparing duty stations, government (MoET) should know that teachers are neither machines nor pigs.

Last year we were told that we are selfish and greedy. Some media houses with so, rented part time politicians tried to score cheap political points using us as their stepping ladders. That was lumpenism on their part! These bystanders, anti SNAT groups, Teachers haters, rented crowds, said we are selfish because, we are educated: our teachers taught us and now we are refusing to teach the young Swazi child. They said we are greedy as we are continuing to get paid yet we are not in schools. What a fallacy!

Let me start with the latter to explain something to the anti SNAT rented crowds, telling us that we get paid for nothing. This is extremely hitting below the belt from their side. Teachers are not on strike and our capable leaders under the leadership of CIC President Mbongwa Giciza Dlamini, have tried many times but in vain trying to capacitate these people about the labour laws. How on earth can someone think like that? Actually we are on guard here home, waiting for COVID-19 vaccine so that we continue with our work which we were trained for. We will get paid like never before and their beef with teachers and the SNAT, in particular, won't help them. Teachers are yet to still get paid.

Recently, we learnt from the media that a certain capitalist was boasting, exercising monologue that workers should be paid hours they have worked. Jesus wept! If he want some

posts somehow somewhere, he must go and do what they do to get those posts. This comrade, I'm inviting him to a debate over what he was trying to unpack, and a friendly warning will let him rejoice over the captured EEC hike and stay far from SNAT. We also learnt that this on, after feeling the heat in the kitchen of politics promised to take some of our leaders to court, a sign of failure and I fear too early, donkeys must not wish to race with horses. It is tough. Capitalist must enjoy while it last as proletarians will soon have control over the means of productions. Their days are numbered.



On the issue of being selfish, I'm also not astounded, never even a single day where we said we don't want to teach our clients, but we were clear and even the courts agreed with us on this one: we said teachers are not machines and we are not guineapigs for experiments. The SNAT Secretary General Cde Sikelela spelt it very clear that teachers are willing to work, and as of yesterday, but our problem was preparedness on the side of the government. We also warned another yellow crowd that, this

is the same government, after opening the schools, they will be nowhere and all the problems will be on their own, they did not listen to the SNAT and SNAT-SASA (the legitimate Headteachers Association). They continued with their Banana backbone and hurried to open schools so that they mistreat our fellow comrades. One day, Old Major, will be taught a lesson in those schools. The recent demands forwarded by the SNAT to our line ministry over the reopening of schools are still in order and the NEC represented us well. Schools must be prepared for reopening and both the SNAT and the government should

check the preparedness and compliance. Last time when we were inspecting the schools, most of the schools were not ready due to the shortage of funds, worse from government. The SNAT also alluded to the fact that teachers must be employed first and all the contracts that expired last must be renewed first, together with those that were not renewed in 2020. When all this is done, then we can talk about dates. Before we reopen, we want teachers to be vaccinated as we will be working with people from different homes. This one makes us front line workers and definitely we are not machines and we will not allowed our comrades to be used as experiments of the third wave looming let it find us vaccinated before we open. My take will be the Russian Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine with 91.8% efficacy for all ages with no side effects will be the best for the Swazi populace. As partners with government and that this time every one is willing to work along one another this is not too much to ask.

As partners with government and that this time every one is willing to work along one another, this is not too much to ask.

**I salute! Aluta**

# The Deplorable State of the Civil Service



**Thabile Zwane**

The NAPSAWU Deputy Secretary

The National Public Services and Allied Workers' Union would like to first pass its gratitude to the Swaziland National association of Teachers (SNAT) for granting us the opportunity to be part of the process of developing and delivering alternative media for members of the Trade Union family. In this totalitarian environment we live in, it is fundamental that we develop alternative sources of information, that are within our control, for our members. As the NAPSAWU, we will contribute, when we can, to this great initiative. In today's article, we shall write about the state of the Public Service in general and the perceived cause of the degeneration.

Anyone who has lived through the last forty [40] years in Swaziland can attest to the degeneration of the Public Service. The Public Service has been slowly but clearly degenerating. The service is no longer the same. Some will blame it on the decline of the economic situation whilst in the opinion of the union the degeneration of the civil service is responsible for the decline of the economy. Civil Servants have, by and large, become despondent and unmotivated. This affects the level of service and invariably affects the delivery of programmes of government that are targeted at sustaining the economy.

## The Public Service

The Public Service has three [3] main functions.

- It advises the Government on policy
- It helps prepare and draft new Legislation
- It helps the Government to run the country according to the legislation passed by parliament and implements government programmes

To achieve this, the Public Service should be staffed by competent and motivated personnel, who believe in merit and the reward for same. Political views should not determine one's promotion, appointment or discipline within the Civil Service.

We have, over the years, seen the disappearance of all these long-held beliefs. We have seen the emphasis on appointments by virtue of one's political belief and bloodline which has created

the Teaching Services Commission and the Judicial Services Commission. All these commissions are seized with the issues of appointments and fundamentally with the issue of discipline within the various sectors of the Public Service they oversee. In the exercise of their constitutional mandates, all of these commissions are supposed to be very independent and not subject to the direction of any person or authority. Section 159 (3) of the Constitution guarantees this independence for the Judicial Services Commission and the same is guaranteed by section 178 for the Civil Service Commission and any other commission that can be setup. All the Commissions are put in place just the same way which is either by the King directly appointing them or appointed by the King on advice or recommendation from someone or body that is itself also put in place by the King. There is very little

participation by the Nation.

The deterioration in the quality of the Service is fundamentally a consequence of the lack of leadership and poor exercise of the oversight function by the Service Commissions and the Executive. Most of the people appointed into these Commissions are appointed not for their abilities but out of their relations with the ruling elite. The lack of merit in their appointment means that they are hardly up to the task at hand. This

method of putting in place the commissioners is the biggest weakness of these Commissions. This only guarantees that in the Commissions only those close to the King or those known by people who can recommend to the King can be appointed. This leaves out a great number of competent citizens, especially the hard working who see little value in trying to hang around the corridors of power. Most times than not, appointments follow a certain unwritten rule of being made from royalty, traditional authorities (Chiefs), religious leaders and then other Royal hangers on.



The author of the article [centre], leading workers in song in one of the PSAs meeting at the SNAT Centre. [Picture courtesy of SNAT Media]

the despondence within the Public Service as more and more incompetent people are appointed, promoted and retained. What is the point in working hard when hard work is not recognized? We have seen a number of appointments to critical positions that have overlooked very competent and hardworking Public Servants, opting for mediocre politically connected individuals who sometimes are not even quite qualified for the positions.

## The Service Commissions

Presently, in the Public Service there are three [3] Service Commissions in place; the Civil Service Commission,

Most of these appointees have no interest in doing the huge job at hand but see the appointments as rewards for loyalty or as their turn to feast. We are reminded of this particular appointee to one the Service Commission who we once found sitting outside the conference room, where the commission conducts its business, reading a Magazine with the Commission engaging in serious business inside. When we enquired from the staff why she was outside whilst the commission was in session, we were told that she occasionally does that 'kungamsuka.' Anywhere else, such conduct would earn you a dismissal or a revocation of your appointment but if your appointment is out of patronage or by bloodline, you escape unhurt with such. This is a typical example of a person who could not apply herself and misbehaving. Such behavior was the very behavior anticipated by Section 175 (4) (b) of the Constitution. The Chairman of the Commission should have taken action for frequent and obvious misbehavior but could not because of her bloodline. If at least after being appointed, these appointees would then put the necessary effort to justify the appointments.

**The Nature of Cabinet Appointments**

Those of you on social media will remember a voice clip that did rounds of an appointed Minister being congratulated on his appointment. The Minister [in the clip] is very honest, with whoever he was engaging with, to first acknowledge that he was not even aware of the existence of the



The NAPSAWU National Executive Committee [NEC].

Ministry before his appointment. He further expresses his view that he considered his appointment mischievous by those who appointed him. Around the same time, there was a video this time of another appointee, who was being congratulated on being appointed to Parliament. The appointee expresses her dislike for waking up early to do work. Unfortunately, that appointee did not only become a Member of Parliament but was elevated to be a member of the Executive. Clearly these two [2] are not the best options the country has for the responsibilities that they are appointed to dispense. These are the caliber of people who, according to the constitution, are tasked with the formulation and implementation of the policy of government. This includes being tasked with the economic turnaround strategy. Your guess on why the economy is not hitting a turn is as good as ours.

These two [2] instances give you an idea of the example to be followed by Public Service. The country's ills are self-created as even during these critical economic times the powers-that-be continue to give responsibilities to people who neither have the capacity nor have the will to put out the necessary effort for the responsibilities given.

The story doing rounds of a whole Cabinet minister not attending cabinet meetings because she is standing up for the Prime Minister or contesting the order of entering Cabinet is the kind of fairytale-like stories that characterize all discourse associated with the Administration of the country. Again, the necessary action for the continued absence from Cabinet will not be taken, setting an example for the Civil Servants that absenteeism has no consequences in the Public Service.

It is such behavior that has led to the present situation of despondence within the Public Service as humans are creatures of habit. Humans easily adapt to their environment. Humans constantly need rewards to incentivise them to work harder. In the absence of good role models and incentives, people will become despondent.

**NB: In our next edition, we will give our opinion on the appointment of Principal Secretaries, Under Secretaries-the free for all and the obvious lack of discipline within these positions.**



The NAPSAWU President addressing workers in a march in 2019 [Picture courtesy of SNAT Media].

# The Use of Criminal Laws as a Barrier to Advocacy by Civil Society, especially LGBTI Organisations



**Melusi Simelane**

Founding Executive Director  
Eswatini Sexual and Gender Minorities

**E**swatini still bears the mark of many colonial hangovers, evidence of which can be found in its laws. As an advocate for the equality of LGBTI persons, gaining access to a seat at the policy decision making tables has taken time and the road to decriminalisation is still ahead. Currently, LGBTI identities are not criminalised in ESwatini, but ancient colonial laws that included the 'crime' of sodomy criminalise homosexual sex, suggesting it is simply a sexual act rather than a broader issue of love and respect. These outdated laws violate Eswatini's Constitutional rights as supported by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), as well as no longer being relevant in the country [United Kingdom] that first set them.

Should anyone be suspected of having committed the sodomy offence, or even found to have had the intention to, they are liable to arrest without a warrant. This is in accordance with the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act of 1938. Furthermore, a National Register for Sex Offenders will enlist them, under clause 56 of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act of 2018.

The circumstances set out above impair and hinder advocacy in many ways and on many levels. In order to do advocacy constant consultation, discussion, demonstration and

**C**riminal law, as distinguished from civil law, is a system of laws concerned with punishment of individuals who commit crimes. Thus, where in a civil case two individuals dispute their rights, a criminal prosecution involves the government deciding whether to punish an individual for either an act or an omission. The issue of decriminalisation of same-sex relations and the realisation of fundamental human rights must be prioritized as a matter of urgency for the Kingdom of Eswatini, writes Melusi Simelane.

persuasion is necessary. Ideally, advocacy is done at both the societal and government levels. The main purpose laws such as this serve is fear mongering, aided by the narrative being perpetuated by traditional and religious authorities in the media. They serve to scare people into self-regulating their behaviour and also encourage a culture of secrecy which has devastating consequences for health practices.

When seeking human rights and health services, these laws endorse homophobic government employees and healthcare providers to deny services or make it so difficult to access that LGBTI people do not seek them at all. This kind of secrecy creates an

invisibility that also bolsters the narrative that LGBTI people do not exist in Africa and hence their rights are irrelevant to equality. When addressing policy makers, evidence of human rights violations is necessary to make the case for LGBTI equality. In a society that scares people into silence and invisibility, evidence becomes a scarce commodity. The erasure caused by these laws fundamentally impact advocacy in that it stifles meaningful engagement with citizens who are not a part of the LGBTI but are potential allies. Opportunities for learning become difficult to enable when sentiments of criminality are attached to the LGBTI, and fear of being identified as a part of the



LGBTI Members in a demonstration in this this photo [Courtesy photo].



The High Court of Swaziland

community stop people from learning or offering allyship.

Although LGBTI voices have made inroads in many spheres of society, the energy to achieve full decriminalisation remains low and unprioritized. The challenges above continue to shut down or seclude civic spaces for engagement on LGBTI equality, thereby stifling impact and progress. Anyone seen as a criminal cannot fully engage power and authority on how to make society a better place for those like them. We must first be emancipated from the suspicion of unjust laws and societal stigma.

Another challenge, which recently presented itself as result of the challenges mentioned above, is that of freedom of association, expression and assembly. In September 2019, the Registrar of Companies refused to register ESwatini Sexual and Gender Minorities (ESGM). ESGM's members subsequently too the refusal to register their organisation to the High Court on the basis that it violates their constitutional rights to dignity, freedom of association and expression, and equality. The Eswatini High Court heard arguments in the registration case on 20 October 2020. We are keenly awaiting judgement on the case.

Throughout the existence of ESwatini society, we have relied on the communal mobilisation of resources and support to overcome difficulties. We have a tradition of supporting our neighbours and communities through collective work (lilima). Our networks are as critical to our survival and resilience, whether we live in rural or urban areas. Depending on our individual, household or community needs, we might seek to join savings groups, burial societies, farming cooperatives, luholiswane, prayer groups, HIV support groups, mothers' groups, trade unions, political organisations, sports clubs or other peer support groups. These forms of organisations provide critical support during times of adversity, especially in the absence of a functioning social welfare system.

In a context where all citizens are not equal, laws which do not specifically provide protection for marginalised groups are always prone to manipulation. The social stigma and prejudice enabled by the law allows members of society, as well those in powerful positions to personalise their application of the law, under the guise of legality. With the common law of "sodomy" in place, law application/enforcement comes to the seemingly fair conclusion that the Constitution does not protect LGBTI citizens. This kind of manipulation remains a risk to all LGBTI advocacy as well as the ethos of basic and fundamental human rights.

It is for these reasons that freedom of association is a fundamental human right which should be protected and not



The country's Chief Justice, Bheki Maphalala [Courtesy photo Times of Swaziland]

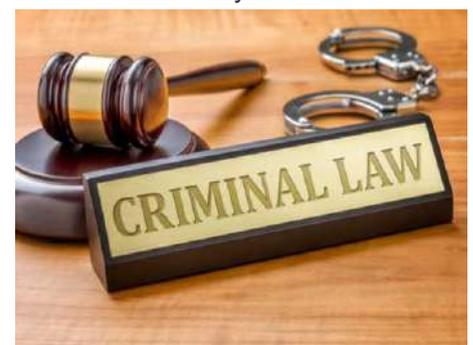
weaponised for political ends. When the State disregards the right to associate freely, it should be of concern to the whole society. If we ignore the rights of persons in society to associate with other like-minded individuals, we create and embark on a slippery slope where our ability to associate with and obtain support from others becomes more insecure.

A country's laws and the values of its people share relationships and feed each other constantly. In this case, an absolute monarchy, laws are based on the preferences of a select few and citizens often have little choice but to abide, in the midst of private and public protest. If LGBTI advocacy is to progress beyond proclaiming the valid existence of LGBTI people in ESwatini, decriminalisation of same-sex relations and the realisation of fundamental human rights must be prioritized as a matter of urgency.

The will to see the process through is also of paramount importance. With legal reform as support, advocacy stands a greater chance of reaching society outside of fear. With more LGBTI people living their lives in full public view, without fear, evidence of the need for equality further bolsters the case for all social structures and services to conform. A legal, healthcare, correctional traditional, social and religious structure that communicates to make sure that conditions are set up for no-one to be left behind enables not only comfortable but healthier existences for citizens. Although this analysis focuses on two areas of concern, there are many other intersecting consequences for LGBTI people such as unemployment and homelessness which feed into larger problems within governance and economics.

These problems also affect all citizens and compound the challenges to advocacy further. As the first UK High Commissioner to Eswatini, in years, John Lindfield MBE, said he does not believe that 'democratic governance and sustainable development can take place when groups of people are excluded from enjoying their human rights.'

With that acknowledged, it again becomes clear to see how criminalisation in addition to the challenges which exist within ESwatini restricts LGBTI life chances to greater extents than other citizens. Decriminalisation first, is our mandate, and should be everyone's.



**You can let your voice be heard by signing our petition for a call to decriminalise same sex relations in ESwatini.**



# The stage is set and fortunately we are all at the starting point (February)



**Terence Thwala**

Financial Advisor

**D**ear leaders, I believe you have all the reasons to cherish this life, especially in the days of the pandemic where people are losing their lives every second. We also would love to send our deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones, either through the pandemic or any other form of death. God willing, you and I are still alive, and it excites me to know we still can plan our finances for the coming months. January/February is that ideal time where our plans are at infancy but come December idealists will still be at planning stage, while realists will be celebrating their achievements.

It is at this stage then that you need to seat, reflect on the past year and then plan for the coming year. I want to then make the following suggestions on what you can do that can save you money or let me say: what can make you have a lot of money in December so that you enjoy life like everyone. For you to meet the set targets you must create a need for money, and set your goals towards attaining or saving that need, which will help you not lose focus during the year when things get hectic.

**1. Join a Stokvel:** This is an organised association of close friends who agree to contribute towards a common cause. Usually, they then borrow from the fund to meet agreed interest for the benefit of the members. The best thing about stokvels is that it will allow you to contribute in small portions, and come December you are sharing food parcels or the money itself. It is advisable to open a bank account to ensure that at least two [2] members signs for withdrawal of funds to avoid disappointments in December, and commercial banks do provide those accounts, and usually free of any charges.

**2. Set an Emergency Fund:** This is a fund set aside to ensure that it cautions you in the event something unexpected happens. That can be anything from hitting a pothole and you need to change all tyres, or when your Microwave just stops working. Instead of rushing for a short loan, you tape on the fund and by standard, the fund must at least be three [3] times your salary, which is in essence is meant to carry you for three [3] months in the event you can lose your job.



**3. Save or Invest:** Usually people confuse these two [2] terms or take them as one. Put simply, to save is to put aside a certain amount with the aim of buying a certain thing later, say a Cell Phone, while on the other hand investing is to place your money with someone who will grow it through giving you interests. It is advisable then to at least take 10% of your earnings to savings, especially with your SACCO or invest it so that in days of drought your first stop is not a loan but harvesting your savings.

**4. Take Insurance Policies:** We cannot overemphasize the need to take insurance policies to cover all what is of monetary value to you, or to cover against all that can make you lose money when it occurs. People are encouraged to take funeral policies which will enable them to pay say E 50 per month, and in the event of death they get E10 000 than to wait for your dependants to die and you borrow that E10 000 which you will repay over years with huge interests. To also secure your dependants future, consider taking life policies that will ensure that beyond taking care of your funeral, your dependants will also be

There are many other things that you can prioritize, but these are the basics, and they cannot self-happen if you do not plan for them. We are also saying you can better organize yourself on all the above through a monthly personal budget. To appreciate the contributions, you made in our lives growing up, we developed a user-friendly budget that can be requested through a WhatsApp on (+268 79 576065). A live demonstration for the better understanding of the budget can be found on our Page 'The Financial Literacy with Mtera Thwala.' Apart from that video, you will receive other financial information that would be of great assistance to you on a daily basis.

Let me conclude our topic by saying, it all begins with planning, but planning without implementation is not good enough. Those who conquer this world are not only good strategists, but they are also good implementers of those strategies. You must pick at least one to do, and never take what is more than your means. One man from my area who used to love the bottle once insulted me and said, 'Yewena silima, umile nalelibhara limile,' and that statement changed my life. Without you acting on your finances, your financial life will never change.

We are happy for this platform, but it is a good platform because you are here, so please stay safe and follow all the guidelines. The question is now with you, which financial target are you setting for yourself this year [2021]?



**Women sharing stokvel money**  
[sourced from  
[www.sowetanlive.co.za](http://www.sowetanlive.co.za)]

# UNPACKING THE SNAT PARTNERSHIP WITH UMHLUMA FOUNDATION



**Mr. Zulu Lungelo**

Founder and Executive Director of Umhluma Foundation

On behalf of Umhluma Women & Youth Foundation (liphimbo lebafelokati) I would like to take this opportunity to express the organization's deepest appreciation for the ongoing partnership with the SNAT since year 2019.

**The aims and objectives of the organization are as follows.**

1. To advocate for the widows' rights
2. To provide legal advice and assistance
3. To provide traditional legal assistance and advice
4. To ensure that Churches adhere to their mandate as enshrined in the Bible.
5. To provide capacity building to the Youth and widows on sustainable development and economic empowerment.



Logo of Umhluma Foundation

**The organization activities that we carry out to the communities are:**

1. Civil education on the roles and responsibilities of the following structures.

1. The role and responsibilities of the Office of Master of the High Court.
  2. The role and responsibilities of the Public Service Pensions Fund
  3. The traditional structure like the Office of Ndabazabantfu
  4. The role of in laws
- Our Vision Statement

A nation where widows, the girl child and the Youth enjoy all rights as enshrined in the Constitution, regional and international human rights to which the kingdom is signatory to without discrimination

Umhluma was founded in year 2016 after a lengthy observation in which widows and their children are suffering and been deprived of their inheritance rights.

**Our Mission Statement**

To empower widows, the girl child and the Youth through imparting knowledge on human rights and skills development in order to reduce vulnerability.

**Why the above-mentioned structures?**

As an organization, we have witnessed and did our research on how widows and their children are deprived of their estates (inheritance rights) by in-laws and other people, who aren't beneficiaries of the estates and most of them do not know estate's rights. Our



One of the events of Umhluma Foundation.

areas of influence are more on reviewing of polices and laws that govern estates and Swazi culture and customs through lobbying and advocacy.

**The Current partners of the organization.**

1. All Nations Christians Church in Zion
2. Swaziland Council of Churches
3. Bible Society

4. Eswatini Fair Trade
5. SNAT
6. ESWADE

On the potential partners side, all structures that deal with deceased monies especially the following;

1. The office of Master of the High Court
2. Public Service Pensions Fund [PSPF]
3. Eswatini National Provident fund [ENPF]

The partnership between Umhluma Women and Youth Foundation (liphimbo lebafelokati) SNAT.

As an organization, we see our partnership with the SNAT growing stronger in leaps and bounds. How so? The SNAT has the majority people that



The SNAT Gender and Human Rights Officer, Sifiso Vilakati in attendance of an event organised by Umhluma Foundation in 2019 [Courtesy photo].

are employed by government, so if all members of the SNAT are well imparted with knowledge of inheritance rights, our partnership will be stronger.

Our Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] allows us, Umhluma, to provide civil education to all 15 SNAT Branches, civil education on inheritance rights, the importance of having a valid will and traditional assistance and advices.

Already, the partnership of the two [2] parties has brought forth positives worth mentioning. The SNAT supported us, in 2019 November during Widows Gala Dinner, the Annual International Widows day, 23 June and 2020 Annual awards which were held at Bible Society House, Mahlanya. Also, we have helped a lot of SNAT members in different aspects of their problems. With the SNAT partnership, we believe that a majority of emaSwati will be imparted with inheritance rights and roles of traditional structures.

I strongly believe that in 10 years, no one will be deprived of their inheritance rights through our partnership with the SNAT.

# THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF ESWATINI HAS FAILED US



**Sacolo Bafanabakhe**

The SNUS SG

As the world continues to advance towards sustainable and inclusive economic growth, science, technology, innovation, infrastructure development and employment creation, Eswatini seems to be stagnant in its sinking ship. It is, without a doubt, extremely wrong to blame citizens for this disgrace, because it is the evil political system that continues to drag the country into the grave.

I am currently studying Bachelor's Degree in Nursing at the University of Eswatini. I sometimes ask myself about the whereabouts of my brothers and sisters whom I began primary, secondary, and high school with. I remember that I used to attend science fair competitions with some of them and many of them would win and even represent the country in South Africa. This shows the creative mind they had, and it showed a promising future for the country. It is a disgrace how the education system of the country pushed them into dustbins where they lie useless and unproductive. It's hard to believe that there is a country that has dustbins for its citizens. According to UNICEF, only 74% of students enrolled in Grade 1 complete Grade 7. These numbers continue to escalate in high school where the education is no longer free. The unemployment rate is 54.8% among young people between the age of 15 and 24.

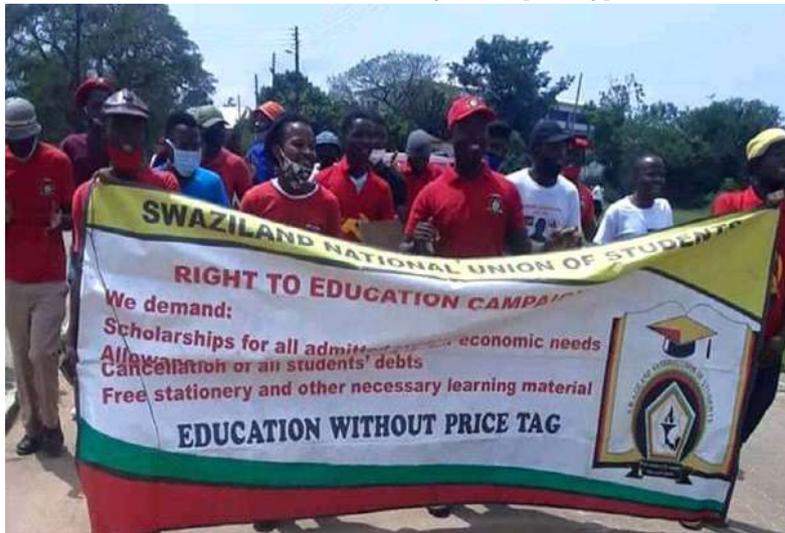
Why is the number of dropouts so high in primary school when education is free and there are lower incidences of pregnancy? The answer to that is very simple: the education is only for those who can pass Maths, English and Science. The system will just automatically 'flush' the rest out of the system and turn them into victims of poverty, gangs and drug abuse. This further leads to their talents and abilities being underdeveloped and their economic opportunities remain limited.

If we can look at how people with talents are earning, look at Trevor Noah, Black Coffee, Dj Maphorisa, Messi, Ronaldo etc. This is because the environment they are living or grew up in was conducive and allowed them to be what they are today. This is the kind of environment and education we want for the citizens of this country. We want to produce entertainers, designers, doctors, soccer stars, scientists, engineers etc. Can you believe that the country train [locally]

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We are happy for this platform, but it is a good platform because you are here, so please stay safe and follow all the guidelines. The question is now with you, which financial target are you setting for yourself this year [2021]? In the meantime, Eswatini was doing nothing but asking for donations where many lives had to be saved. It is a shame to note that even the politicians of the country who are responsible for this were aware of the doomed system, thus running for health assistance from other countries, leaving Swazis to die in their blunder.



The SNUS in one of their protests for a quality higher education in the country [Courtesy picture].

even a single doctor? This has been a tough time in the world where doctors and nurses have been busy saving lives and scientists formulating vaccines. There are many other things that you can prioritize, but these are the basics, and they cannot self-happen if you do not plan for them.



**The author believes the country's education is failing to provide the necessary skills needed to develop.**

We can learn from other developed countries like China, for example. Since the adoption of Deng Xiaoping's economic liberalisation reforms in 1978, China has been geared towards economic modernisation. This has led to a spectacular economic growth to the country and no other country in the world has undergone a more rapid and large-scale process of enormous transformation that has turned the country from an impoverished agricultural society into an industrial manufacturing powerhouse. This is what Eswatini should be doing. Within two [2] decades, the country would be one of the best countries in the world and every country in the world would learn from us.

Only a free and relevant education can make this country forward. As Che Guevara once said, 'The wall of the educational system must come down. Education should not be a privilege, so the children of those who have money can study.' The country has lost many great minds because of the high cost of education in the country. The education is also far from being relevant. The world is now living in the Fourth Industrial Revolution [4IR] where the world is using modern smart technology in production. As low as in primary school, children learn computer programming in China while here in Eswatini they learn this at tertiary level.

Then you can see how our education is irrelevant, and how far we are from catching up with the likes of China. If the government of this country is not investing on its youth, it simply means that the country does not deserve a future. This should serve as a wake-up call to the youth of this country. I refuse to believe that the youth of this country does not want a bright future. We have to demand a government that is serving the interests of the people rather than looting public funds. How long should we be treated as slaves in our own country? For how long should we beg for what is ours? Fidel Castro cannot rise from his grave to free us.

We have nothing to lose but our chains!



# POOR INSPECTION IN THE WORKPLACES, WILL PROVE TO BE OUR UNDOING



**Comrade Vincent  
"VV" Ncongwane**

The above is true particularly with the lack of prosecutions by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security of employers who violate applying basic conditions of employment in their workplace.

Starting with Employment Notices, Section 9 (2) (c) (iii) of the Employment Act 1980 and Section 18 (1) (2) (3) and (4) of the Wages Act 1964, call for the display of these Notices at the workplaces. These Acts put the pain of fines for failure to display the Notices, but employers get away with it because of poor inspections and visible immediate remedial action for such failure.

Eswatini has some 16 workplaces or so that are governed by the Wages Orders that are the product of the various Wages Councils that have been set-up to determine basic conditions in those sectors. The operations of these Councils are funded by the budget of the Ministry, and are populated by representatives nominated by the Government, Employers' and Workers' Federations. With the wide-scale violations when we pay so much for those representatives, we need to ask ourselves whether we are getting value for money. These Notices provide information on basic things like wages to be paid for the various categories in the diverse sectors



and must be put up in the places visible for the employees. We would expect that this is so in the hotels/lodges, shops, transport, security companies, factories, garages, schools (both public and private), farms and shared with the domestic workers, as an example.

The responsibility we have as workers is not to look the other way and keep quiet when these violations are there in our faces. That I may work as a civil servant or in the bank or as teacher, is no excuse not to point out the lack of these Notices or helping the workers in those sectors, who are disadvantaged despite the provisions of these Notices. Let us remember that the workers in these sectors are relatives to all of us. Looking after their interests is looking after the interests of relatives, so to speak.

The Wages Orders, (which in reality are the Notices) currently cost no more than E50.00 per Order, and should come out annually, but at times they come out at least once in two years.

Therefore, as activists, which I hope we are rather than being only members of the various trade unions, it behoves us to expose to knowledge those of us who just work and do not know about all these labour provisions.

We complain so much about underpayments and yet do not lift even a finger to assist those workers affected by such. Listen to us talk the distance about the disregard the employers have about our welfare yet are silent when employers do not ensure the workers in the workplaces. I have referred to above as Section 25 (1) of the Workmen's Compensation Act 1983. We are only content to raise our voices in protest. We need to explore ways to promote prosecutions by taking on the Ministry to task for its leisurely approach to the violations. Let us take it beyond words to action.

It would be remiss of me if I were to close on this topic without touching on the Procurement Act 2011, which was designed as "An Act to provide for the regulation and control of practices in respect of public procurement. I suggest that it would serve the trade unions and the civil society if they were to borrow some of the provisions thereof when dealing with issues of procurement. It does not serve us well as trade unionists to only be good at throwing stones at the regime and ignore some of the gaps in our own procurement processes, yet we oversee huge sums of public money in the procurement space.

One is particularly taken with Section 40 (1) (c) and (d) of the Procurement Act, which safeguards the interests of workers. Painfully though, when we give contracts to service providers, as Unions, we are sometimes as equally guilty as the employers for ignoring whether these service providers meet these standards.

I would urge that those of our committees both in civil society and labour, whether in the apex organisations or lower rung organisations must ensure that all the basic provisions relating to labour rights are met by the providers. It is such sanctions that will ensure that we throw our weight in the fight for respect for worker rights. For example, look at how we go to the hotels and care less whether they are worker-friendly. Let us take our activism beyond workshops.

Reading the Ministry's annual performance reports that it presented to Parliament for the past two [2] years, you painfully learn of the noted violations, but never the prosecutions, and our Parliament nor ourselves, see no problem about this.



**Basic Employee  
Rights [Courtesy of  
www.praxialliance.com]**

It is my fervent wish that the exchanges we have in this wonderful forum do not end up in nice to read about cases, but urge us into action to make the necessary noise to the Ministry so that tangible benefits start being enjoyed by the affected workers. Only then can we live the Unions' mantra that "An injury to one is an injury to all."

As Martin Luther King Jnr. reminds us, "There comes a time when silence becomes betrayal."

# Snaking Capitalists



**Cebisile Mhlanga**

Mbabane Gender and Hhohho  
Regional Secretary

Countless thoughts cloud my mind as one envisages this government of the supposedly “beautiful Kingdom; her cruelty and cunning tactics simply thwarts any dreams of contentment for civil servants. Let us take a glimpse at the precarious conditions of the education and degenerating health sectors in juxtaposition with the said security forces.

Those empathetic with contracted teachers could not help it but “froze half through...” the utterances of the Education Principal Secretary as captured by the Eswatini Observer after he had indicated that engaging contract teachers was still a farfetched dream, then he boldly asserted, “We cannot renew contracts for the sake of paying people who will not be working.” The feeling on hearing this is tantamount to that of observing a “great black snake reeling by.”

**“Sun warmed in the, this late season's grace Under the autumn's gentlest sky We walked, and froze-half through a pace The great black snake went reeling by,” adapted from *Hunting Snake* by: Judith Wright**

Mean would be an understatement if one considers that this was directed to educated Swazi citizens who have been let down by the system of capitalism prevalent with our snaking employers. A Nigerian Labour Congress publication posits, “...there can never be sustained progress anywhere unless there is social justice and injustice anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere.” If this, our government has any hopes of advancing, it would be paramount to take some kind of introspection into how citizens feel about her operations. These Pharisaic tendencies are pathetic.

A Global Trend Analysis of the Role of Trade Unions in Times of COVID-19 acknowledges that employer organisations 'have proven indispensable to designing and implementing appropriate strategies and policies...' Why is our government operating in silos, whose interests is government expected to further? How long will it take for our system to be pragmatic and engage the relevant stakeholders meaningfully without exhibiting snake-like tendencies? Reports from conferences have

indicated numerous attempts made during bilaterals aimed at making the lives of teachers-especially where employment is concerned better-but to no concrete avail. One is not startled to note how even the clearly spelt out procedures by the Employment Act of 1980 on how our employment needs to be carried out are violated. Part 2 Section 9 (b) reads, “...an Inspector shall ensure that all laws relating to conditions of employment and protection of employees in their occupations are fully applied.” Then it is a great cause for concern to note that our Inspectorate are visible when it comes to them attacking teachers for what they would have failed to do in the name of inspecting teaching and learning. And the mind boggling questions are: who was ever employed in the presence of an inspector? Are they negating their duties or their powers have been usurped? As if that is not enough, our crumbling health sector too has so many irregularities yet we need some conviction that we shall be taken care of whenever our health needs attention. The Swaziland News, on the 4th of February captured the nurses' union President advising that, “The E 50.4 million budgeted for the recruitment of new police officers was enough to hire half of the nursing staff needed to boost the health system in the country.” It goes without saying that this has fallen on deaf ears with our snaking government who wants to convince the outside world that health care is prioritized by government when the reality on the ground leaves so much to be desired. Do we need police officers to salvage the corona crisis? So, why our resources stretched to limits where we can afford to remain afloat?



The PS at the MoET Bertram Stewart  
[Photo courtesy of the Times of Swaziland].



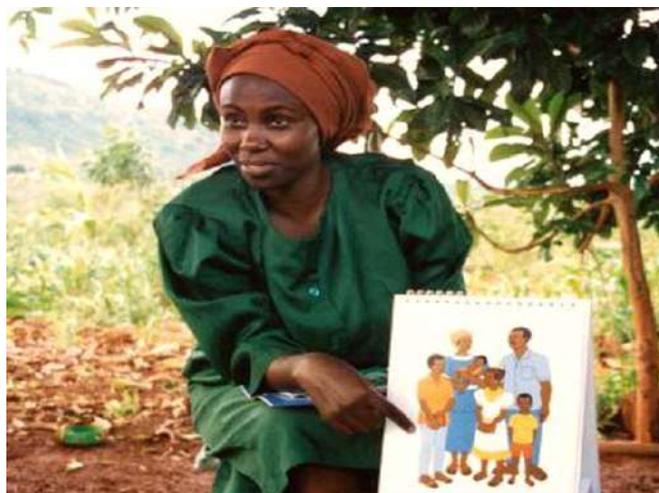
OSSU armed to the teeth in one of the PSAs marches.

Adding salt to the injury is how these forces are accorded exceptional treatment as they are the only ones who start getting paid on recruitment and the word 'contract' which haunts teachers and paramedics does not exist in their vocabulary. The Eswatini Times, 5 February, 2021, captured amongst the demands by paramedics, essential service providers, who were left without an option but to engage on a strike simply because this 'great black snake' adamantly rears its ugly head, that their hiring should be prioritised once they serve internship for more than a year. So, this is quite mouthful in articulating the atrocities of this 'our' government on her citizens. Why is it that the army has never had similar conditions of being employed on contracts or engaged as interns and be without employment benefits?

A similar case can be drawn from the community health motivators

who are exploited willy-nilly by government. These individuals are taken through some preparatory courses for months, and this is not different from what the Army does as training, but the health motivators have no definite form of engagement by this cunning system.

These are all citizens of the country and they are contributing selflessly to our upkeep. Question is: why don't they get clear terms of engagement and be remunerated accordingly because the health sector is immensely benefitting from their contributions?



A community Health Care Worker [Photo sourced from www.hifa.org].

The heavy heart shall be lulled by Deuteronomy 24: 14, "You shall not oppress a hired servant..." and Jeremiah 22: 13, "Woe to him or her who builds their house by unrighteousness..." We cannot boast being the Pulpit of Africa yet have nothing to show for it. This "reeling great black snake" is too much to bear for workers. "Under the autumn's gentlest sky," we have frozen. But we shall not succumb, battling for a good course is what we are ready for, this snake should never intimidate us.

**ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!!!**

# COVID-19: AN OPPORTUNITY TO RELOCATE DEGREEDED PRIMARY TEACHERS TO HIGH SCHOOLS



**Comrade Mandla "Cow1" Nkomonye**  
TEATQ Member

The corona virus pandemic has dealt a heavy blow to world economies and as well as to our own local economy, which in truth was already on its knees as a result of corruption (an illness which has become a norm and a culture in Swaziland).

As the COVID 19 pandemic continues to ravage the world with the second and third waves coming, our lives have been affected and sadly most of these changes are negative ones. We all know how this deadly pandemic has crippled the economy and tested health systems both locally and internationally. Swaziland has not been spared the wrath of this monstrous virus and as a result we have recently seen a surge in positive cases and death during the second wave. This has had a negative impact in both the education and health sectors in our tiny kingdom.

Since March last year (2020), schools have been closed in an effort to protect both learners and teachers from the pandemic as schools have the potential of being breeding grounds of the virus due to the high number of people in one place at a time. The closure of schools by the MoET

although a good move has had negative effects on: recently graduated teachers, contracted teachers as well as Degreed high school teachers teaching at primary schools. The TSC has put the hiring of teachers on ice since the beginning of the pandemic as schools are closed. This therefore means new graduates and those comrades whose contracts expired in December 2020 are out of gainful employment and thus exposed to poverty. In one of the daily publications, it was revealed that a total of 2000 contract teachers might not have their contracts renewed. This is a huge

primary schools for over a decade and were looking forward to being relocated to their rightful posts, which comes with better remuneration (pay according to their qualifications).

The failure by the government of the land to prioritise the health sector has led to the death of many Swazis including our fellow colleagues and brothers in arms (may their souls rest in peace). What pains me the most is that some of these fallen comrades died while being paid at C3 instead of C5 and as such their gratuities significantly reduced. The unstable health system negatively affects the education sector as more teachers get infected with

some losing their lives due to the shortage of medication in the country's health facilities and lack of medical aid from the employer (government). This collapsing health system has a huge bearing in terms of the reopening of schools, leaving both parents and learners in the dark as to when will schools reopen.

As the government is gearing up for the reopening

of schools, it needs to provide more classrooms for the purposes of social distancing and that means it (government) has to hire more teachers. The TSC should take this opportunity to relocate Degreed teachers teaching in primary schools into their rightful posts thus creating vacancies in the primary schools which should be filled by the hundreds of unemployed teachers sitting at home.

**TEATQ lives! TEATQ is an ORGAN!**



A teacher in class [sourced from UNHCR.org]

inconvenience for these comrades and their families, more especially during this time of economic meltdown.

The freezing of hiring and relocation of teachers by the TSC also spells doom for Degreed high school teachers placed in primary schools as their relocation from primary schools to their rightful posts in high schools hangs in the balance. Some, if not most of these comrades have been teaching in

# COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS [CA]



**Emmanuel Dlamini**

The SNAT Recording Secretary

## Preamble

Subsequent to the adaptation of the Recognition Admission the Government of Swaziland (hereafter referred to as the Government) and the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (hereinafter referred to as the SNAT), on March 18, 1992 there was to then be need for the parties to structure and enter into a Collective Agreement. Part of the Memorandum from the SNAT Secretary General, Cde Maduduza Zwane (as he then was), dated March 24, 1992 with the express intention to draw the attention of all Teachers falling within the category of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) to the implications of the signed Recognition Agreement [RA], stated as hereunder. That;

- “The Recognition Agreement is an agreement in writing which has been negotiated by the Teachers Representative and the Government (i.e. SNAT and the Employer) and which contains Terms and Conditions of Employment and procedures for grievances and settlement of disputes. However, this agreement so far details the issues that the two [2] Parties can Negotiate and not yet how the issues are going to be handled. A Collective Agreement [CA] on the issues will be negotiated soon and signed.” Part 2.1 on p. 11-12 of the Memorandum, in the Recognition Agreement.1992, refers.

As the record declares, it followed that the said Collective Agreement between the two [2] Parties was to be entered into, in terms of the Industrial Relations Act. 1980 (as then was), and further being effective from April 01, 1993 to March 31, 1994. At the time, the duration of a Collective Agreement was a period of twelve [12] months, after which it was subject to review or modification.

Section 1.1 of the Collective Agreement stated that, “This Collective Agreement, negotiated in accordance with the Industrial Relations Act.1980, shall be binding to all Teachers and upon the Ministry of Education, Teaching Service Commission, Ministry of Labour and Establishment and the Government of Swaziland.”

The primary purpose of this Article is to ignite a level of consciousness that will compel the Union through engagements at structural level, to translate those negotiated Settlements/Agreements within the bargaining machinery into Collective Agreements, noting well in the process, that not all such Agreements could be transformed into Collective Agreements.

### Definition of Collective Agreement

According to Section 2 of the Industrial Relations Act.2000 (as amended) and hereinafter referred to as the IRA, under Interpretation, Collective Agreement means, “An agreement in writing covering Terms and Conditions of Employment and



procedures for the settlement of disputes and grievances, concluded by a Joint Negotiation Council, or by an Employer, a group of Employers or an Employer’s Association on the one

hand and a Trade Union or Staff Association on the other hand.”

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and for purposes of the ILO Collective Agreements Recommendation number 91, under Part 2 (1) - Definition of Collective Agreements, Collective Agreements means, “All agreements in writing regarding Working Conditions and Terms of Employment concluded between an Employer, a group of Employers or one or more Employers’ Organisations on the one hand, and one or more Representatives of Employee Organisations, or, in the absence of such Organisations, the Representatives of the Workers duly elected and authorised by them in accordance with National Laws and Regulations, on the other.”

As if to then distinguish the SNAT as a lawfully registered and legally recognised Employee Representative Organisation from such other Teacher Organisations as the Eswatini Principals Association (EPA), which the Ministry of Education & Training (MoET) constantly falls into the convenient temptation to treat as if Legally recognised beyond its lawful Registration and in terms of National Laws (Section 42 of the IRA, in this instance), Part 2 (2) of the ILO Recommendation states that, “Nothing in the present definition should be interpreted as implying the Recognition of any Association of Workers established, dominated or financed by Employers or their Representatives.”

### Impact of Collective Agreements

This part deals with the status of Registered Collective Agreements.

The submission and registration of a Collective Agreement with the Industrial Court in terms of Sections 55 and 56, respectively, of the IRA, could be reasonably construed as 'ad idem' (Latin: towards the same). Indicating that the Parties to a transaction are in agreement (on the contents thereof).

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
THE SWAZILAND  
GOVERNMENT  
AND  
THE SWAZILAND NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS

EFFECTIVE APRIL 1st, 1993 TO MARCH 31st, 1994

The Collective Agreement that the SNAT signed with the Government of Swaziland actioning the 18 March 1992 Recognition Agreement [Photo courtesy of SNAT Media].

The registration also seals a 'consensus ad idem' (Latin: agreement on the same thing). The Agreement by the contracting Parties to identical terms that is necessary for the formulation of a Legally binding Contract. The undertaking could therefore be reasonably construed as an addendum to the Contract of Employment in so far as compliance with Section 57 (2) of the IRA and thus becoming protected in terms of the Employment Act.1980 (as amended), until or unless annulled by both Parties through due process.

The registered Agreement assumes the status of the Terms and Conditions specified in a Contract of Employment and remains protected by Law until both Parties cause changes thereto, through due process. The registration by the Court accords it with the force of Law, as then being an Order of Court. Meaning, in its purposes and intent, it could be enforceable through contempt proceedings, among other remedies. The Agreement does not bar the employer from granting more favourable Terms and Conditions of Employment than provided for in the Agreement. Section 60 of the IRA, refers.

The Agreement is legally binding to the Employer in the same manner as to the Employees covered or represented. Section 57 (1) of the IRA, refers.

Section 57 (3) of the IRA impresses the notion that Parties have appreciated the substance of their Agreement on specified elements regarding the Terms and Conditions of Employment, going forward.

One is of the considered view that although the SNAT has not negotiated for such Collective Agreements as on Teacher employment (to deal with minimum standards and curb casualisation), Teacher relocation (addressing transfers and correction of improper placements as in the case of some Contracted Employees), Teacher retention (including career development, motivation, Social security, Wellness issues - including Occupational Safety and Health standards) and many others that even the 1993 – 1994 Collective Agreement contained.

According to Herbstein and Van Winsen, The Civil Practice of the Superior Court of South Africa, on consideration of cases for contempt proceedings express that, "Orders of Court are, generally speaking divided into 'orders as pecuniam solvendam' (i.e. orders ad factum praestandum' (i.e. orders to do, or to abstain from doing, a particular act or, to deliver a thing). It is not every Order of Court which can be enforced by committal for contempt. The Order must be one ad factum praestandum before the Court will enforce it in that manner."

It follows therefore, that the structure, language and nature of the registered Agreement may determine the material extent of Legal action thereupon.

**This article shall be continued in the April 2021 Edition of The Eagle**

# AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE SNAT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE



**Hlengiwe Mamba**

SNAT Conference Committee Secretary

The Conference Committee takes this time to lower its banner in honour of our recently fallen Chairperson, Joseph Sondlo. A SNAT stalwart is gone and will forever be missed by, not only us who have worked closely with, but all those whose life he has touched in one way or another. As a Committee, we were handicapped by his demise as it created a vacancy in a principal position. Since we cannot coopt, the Deputy Chairperson, as allowed by the constitution, shall be acting until a bi-election can be held or conference decides otherwise.

The conference Committee is established by clause 15.2 of the August 2012 SNAT Constitution. It is guided by its own bylaws. Key amongst



**GC Members in Session during the SNAT-OAJ Project at Esibayeni Lodge [Courtesy of SNAT Media].**

its duties, is to organize and run SNAT Conferences. This, it does in collaboration with Credentials Committee and Resolution Committee (Article 19.1.1.1). It is also the duty of this committee to raise funds to help towards conferences as it is common knowledge that conferences are expensive.

The committee has sat down and looked at what it could do to better achieve its mandate. Raising funds has been key in our deliberations. The only set back is that the union lacks a Resource Mobilization Policy. This then waters down any efforts by the



**Conference Committee Members brainstorming during their workshop November 13, 2020 [Courtesy Photo].**

committee to solicit funds and or engage in fundraising drives. We are hopeful that the next conference shall deal exhaustively with this issue. The committee cannot afford to fold hands because of the absence of a policy. Life must go on. It is in our plans to approach SNAT's business partners to assist us in whatever way possible towards the success of the conferences. We also plan to see our own conference center being built. Moreover, since delegates are paid for by structures, we would like to encourage structures to make arrangements and start paying for their delegates to enable the committee to prepare for conference and give delegates an experience to remember.

Running a conference does not end with preparations. Article 19.2.10 talks to the conduct of delegates during conferences. This task requires the Conference Committee to work hand in hand with other committees. One structure, that as a committee, we feel plays an important part, is the marshals structure.

It would be well appreciated by us as a committee that Branches, in their list of delegates, include at least a marshal who shall be deployed by the committee to perform some of the duties as outlined in article 19.2.10.

As everyone would know by now, we are supposed to have had two [2] conferences and 2021 should be our third conference. The COVID-19 pandemic reared its ugly head and prevented us from hosting any. This year, however, we need to have conferences because that is where leaders derive their mandate. Besides that, a number of changes in terms of policy documents have to be implemented in 2022. This may require a slight deviation from article 20.4 to adhere and conform to COVID-19 Regulations. This may not be ideal situation but life must go on even under the new normal. Understanding and patience is beseeched from members of the 91 year old union.

As the last permanent Conference Committee, before the ad hoc status as deemed fit by the new organogram, we would like to reinforce our call for hurrying up of the finance mobilization policy. This will enable SNAT to continually source funds so that when an ad hoc committee assumes this arduous task, it wouldn't have to crack its head over finances or alternatively it would be very clear who it could approach for funding. The change in status really calls for the committee to hit the ground running. We are looking forward to bringing you successful conference this year [2021]. May you be richly blessed.



**Conference Committee Deputy Chairperson, Lindo Mabuza making his remarks during the committee's workshop last year [Courtesy Photo].**

# WHY JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO ALL YOUR NEEDS



## Welcome Ngwenya

Anointed Man of God

I begin this article by thanking the wisdom of SNAT NEC to afford us such an opportunity to share the good news while we are at lock down, Churches and other gatherings still temporarily closed. Special accolade is forwarded to the SNAT Editor for initiating such platform. To God be the glory!!  
1st Corinthians 10 vs 13

The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you can endure.

Every human is susceptible of committing sin, being tempted, being rejected, being betrayed, being lonely, being accused, being lied on, being frustrated among others. But when you accept Jesus as your personal Saviour, when these battles attack you, He stands-in on your behalf to fight and win for you. Jesus does not intervene to anyone's battles but only to those who accepted Him as Christ and their personal Saviour, through Romans 10 vs 9: nothing else. The devil consoles itself to all non-believers (John 10 vs 10).



The main agenda of Satan is to kill, steal and destroy only; on the contrary, Jesus gives life to the killed, stolen and destroyed.

We are all vulnerable to sin, attacks, pain, criticisms, accidents, non-curable diseases, contagious diseases and false accusations.

Have you ever been criticized, falsely?

Have you ever been accused, falsely?

Have you ever been let down by a trusted friend?

Have you ever lost a job, a child, wife, husband, promotion, trip etc?

Have you ever suffered a non-curable disease?

Have you ever been amputated a body part?

If you suffered one of the above, you must know how painful it is, without support, emotionally and financially. But if you have never experienced one of the above, I am sure you don't know pain and you sure don't wish one. But Jesus says during these storms, sicknesses, calamities, pain etc, He will be with you. He will make sure you are not tempted with what is above your ability. In Christ, your burdens are weighed. God first tests it for you if you can handle that situation. If He sees its above you, He refuses for the burden to be given to you; instead, He says during your battle, He will give you strength to fight your enemies and win: make a way out for you if the battle is tight for you. When Jesus is on your side, you fight with advantage, knowing the referee is on your side during the whole game. We all want to win. We all want to be favoured by referees. His faithfulness does not allow Him, to allow His children to be outplayed in battle. His faithfulness refuses accidents and sicknesses to destroy you, unless it is in His divine will. His faithfulness denies witchcrafts will over you. His faithfulness refuses premature death in you. His faithfulness makes you to swim in victory, in win, in love, in peace, in forgiveness, despite of whoever is challenging you; despite of who is against you; despite of what missiles your enemies use. He becomes your shield, cover, strength, your victory, your joy. Because greater is He that is in us than the one that is in the world, and if the Lord is for us who can be against us, because in our battle, it is not by might nor by power but by the Spirit of God.

That's why Jesus does not want to see you tired, defeated, lamenting, heavily yoked, instead He made this invitation, then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Matthew 11:28-30. Nobody wants tired people. Nobody wants crying people. Nobody wants non-perfect people but Jesus loves us with our deficiencies. The rejected, made useless, spat upon. That's what He wants. Jesus loves the sinner but not the sin. The sin makes us dirty to Him but repentance washes us completely and makes us favourites to God. There is no sin that cannot be forgiven. Matthew 12:30-32

Remember, you are wonderfully and fearfully made. You are God's own image. He can't give up on you. He died for you. You were bought with His blood, years ago. The blood of Jesus makes us Holy, beautiful, glorious before the Lord. If you feel your burdens are more than you can bear:

If you feel you are losing courage to live: If you feel you are challenged such that there is no way out:

If you feel you are weary, carrying heavy burden, and heavily yoked, with pain, frustration, debts, no peace: accept Jesus today as your personal saviour. Definitely, He will give you rest and peace of mind.

Simply say:  
*"Jesus, I accept you as my personal Saviour now, as per your invitation. I confess all my sins to you. I believe you raised Jesus from the dead and I believe in my heart that Jesus is Lord. Deregister my name in the book of death and register my name to the book of Life. Thank you, Lord, for accepting me as your child. Amen."*

**Be blessed! See you in the next edition of The Eagle!**

**Pastor Welcome M. Ngwenya is currently teaching at Malindza Community Primary School in the Lubombo Region, Siteki Top Branch of the SNAT. He is based at Gebeni (Bethynia F.E.A.) under Pastor Peter Khumalo. He can be reached at [welcomemabuya@gmail.com](mailto:welcomemabuya@gmail.com) +268 7614 3295, WhatsApp.**

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# MEET YOUR SNAT-OSISA PROJECT OFFICER: MS. THOBEKILE MABUZA



**Thobekile Mabuza**

SNAT-OSISA Project Officer

**S** **NAT MEDIA [SM]:** Good day Thobekile.

**Thobekile Mabuza [TM]:** Good day to you too.

**SM:** We have been seeing you around for a while. Tell us more: who is Thobekile Mabuza? And where have you been attached before?

**TM:** Well, I am a compassionate person. I love people and working with people is my passion. I am very friendly, this enables me to interact with all different personality types. I am from a family of five [5], born and raised in Ezulwini. I am a Public Relations graduate. Previously, I was employed by Challenge Ministries in the Administration Department with four [4] years of experience in this field. My work experience proves that I am a perfectionist, I never consider something done as long as I don't find it perfect.

**SM:** Hmm...that's great. Now what do you understand about the OSISA/SNAT Project? What are the aims and objectives of the project?

**TM:** The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted ways of living and access to education in the world. OSISA being an African institute committed to deepening democracy, protecting human rights and enhancing good governance in the region has joined together in partnership with SNAT in response to the pandemic. This institute has funded SNAT to carry out this project on the basis of a shared vision.

The aims and objectives are;

1. To increase the compliance of 933 Public Schools to the WHO's and the country's COVID-19 Safety Standards and Regulations.

2. To ensure the government is held accountable for the safe reopening of 933 public schools during and post COVID-19 pandemic.

3. To improve the resilience of learners and teachers who lost parents, siblings, spouses or biological children to COVID-19 related deaths.

**SM:** Wow! That's really mouthful! How do you intend to roll out the programme as Project Officers?

**TM:** Firstly, it will be by implementing the right strategies. We plan to do this by setting goals that are specific, measurable, achievable and relevant. Secondly, by creating a plan of action which we have already created and approved by management. Also eliminating bad habits. The way I see it, no one is perfect and we all make mistakes but we should learn from those mistakes and be better when given a second chance to do tasks. Professionalism is key to the success of any project. My position involves a lot of field work which means that I will be conducting a lot of field visits to assess the compliance of schools to the WHO's and the country's COVID-19 safety standards and regulations. We have already outlined resources needed to carry out this task.

**SM:** Well, COVID-19 has devastated many countries and the education systems. In your opinion, how can government build capacity of institutions to comply with the SOPs and the Non-Negotiables?

**TM:** 1. Information is a very good source of learning. For training purposes, the government should build a virtual safety training delivery platform in partnership with private sector e-learning companies with the capability to deliver synchronized just-in-time web-based training across the

country and most importantly in targeted high-risk sectors. Virtual classroom sessions with trainer interaction and video based e-learning is also vital during this time. The government should launch a website with important educational resources for institutions dealing with the spread of COVID-19.

2. After the training has been done, the government should then conduct visits to observe and check if these institutions are doing what they have been trained to do in response to adhering to the COVID-19 safety standards and regulations. The government can do this by sending representatives to check the compliance in each of the institutions.

3. Sitting with the institutions to provide feedback on issues they noted while assessing the institutions.

4. Attaching money or issuing fines if certain safety measure are not followed.

**SM:** Oh yeah! How have you worked with the Wellness Department of the SNAT?

**TM:** We have worked really well so far and they have been very supportive. It has been cooperative and productive as they gave us a workshop on COVID-19 to give us knowledge on the basics of the virus which included the following topics:

- 1.1 The origins of Corona Virus
- 1.2 Transmission of Corona Virus
- 1.3 Prevention principles
- 1.4 Signs and symptoms of Corona Virus
- 1.5 Surveillance at school

**SM:** Well, we wish you all the best as you ensure that schools comply with the COVID-19 Regulations and Protocols.

**TM:** Thank you for the positive wishes and thank you for having me.

**SM:** Thank you for your time.



**SIBONGINKHOSI MTHUPHA**

SNAT-OSISA PROJECT OFFICER

# MEET YOUR SNAT-OSISA PROJECT OFFICER: MR. SIBONGINKHOSI MTHUPHA

**S** **NAT MEDIA [SM]:** Good day Sibonginkhosi.

**Sibonginkhosi Mthupha [SM]:** Good day sir, I hope you have been enjoying your day.

**SM:** We have been seeing around for a while. Tell us more: who is Sibonginkhosi Mthupha? And where have you been attached before?

**SM:** I am a Swazi man born and raised in the kingdom. I am from Nyakatfo a place situated seven kilometres before Buhleni. Along the Madlangempisi-Buhleni route. I am born an entrepreneur, in that case. I have been running my carpentry and joinery projects for the past two [2] years.

**SM:** Hmm...that's great. Now what do you understand about the OSISA/SNAT Project? What are the aims and objectives of the project?

**SM:** OSISA/SNAT Project is a project jointly sponsored by OSISA and the SNAT. The aim of the project is to foster COVID-19 compliance from the government in schools so that Teachers and students can be protected from the outbreak of COVID-19. The main objective of the project is to increase compliance of 933 public schools to the WHO's and the country's COVID-19 safety standards and regulation. To further ensure a safe re-opening of schools and to improve the

resilience of learners and teachers who lost relatives during the pandemic.

**SM:** Wow! That's really mouthful! How do you intend to roll out the programme as Project Officers?

**SM:** We are going to roll out this project with a very good report and all objectives accomplished. We are working with our SG in every stage of the project, including other stakeholders which are the SNAT Representatives. Those Representatives will be responsible for giving relevant information so that our reports and analysis becomes a true reflection of the conditions in terms of COVID-19 safety standards.

**SM:** Well, COVID-19 has devastated many countries and the education systems. In your opinion, how can government build capacity of institutions to comply with the SOPs and the Non-Negotiables?

**SM:** Government should ensure adequate supply of sanitizers and face masks or face shields. This will assist in a situation where a student has lost a mask during the day. All necessary markings and posters at relevant places should be placed. If a school has no separate classroom, they can convert one classroom into a counselling room. Where there is none, schools should build that room before reopening.

The ministry should also liaise with the school's response team regarding all the necessary Safety and Regulation Standards.

**SM:** Oh yeah! How have you worked with the Wellness Department of the SNAT?

**SM:** I have been working with the Wellness Department wonderfully. We got a very powerful workshop on COVID-19. We really appreciate the department and I am looking forward to a maintained good working environment.

**SM:** Well, we wish you all the best as you ensure that schools comply with the COVID-19 Regulations and Protocols.

**SM:** Thank you very much Sir.

**SM:** Thank you for your time.

# THE SNAT MEDIA ENGAGES WITH THE NATIONAL TEAM (SIHLANGU) ASSISTANT COACH-ANTHONY MDLULI



**Anthony Mdluli**

The National Team (Sihlangu)  
Assistant Coach

**S** **NAT MEDIA [SM]:** Mr. Mdluli, good day Sir.

**ANTHONY MDLULI [AM]:** Good morning Mr. Editor.

**SM:** We are really humbled and pleased to have you here Mr. Mdluli. Thank you for your time. Now, Mr. tell us, who is Anthony Mdluli?

**AM:** Anthony Mdluli is a teacher at Lobamba Lomdzala High. He is from Ngwazini in the Manzini, schooled at Ngwazini, St Florence and completed at Mbabane Central. Taught at KaShile high and Malunge high before my current school. Presently, I am the Vice President at ESSA. In sports I am football coach holding various coaching licences from CAF, FIFA and International Coaching Diploma from Budapest Hungary. I am also an Instructor in Football Coaching.

**SM:** Hmmm...that's great! Indeed, teachers are multi-talented. We know you as a Coach for Ladies Soccer. Tell us about your time at Malunge High when you started Ladies Soccer Team. What was the overall aim?

**AM:** Actually, I started Ladies soccer while at kaSchiele high school. It was an idea from kaShile, St Francis, St Marks, and Waterford and myself. Mr. Myengwa Sibandze, Mr. Bhekisisa Bizzah Mkhonta and Mr. Howe were behind the idea. When I transferred to Malunge High, I brought the idea of Ladies Soccer and SSSA adopted idea as I was working in one National Committee. More schools started participating in Ladies Soccer. However, some communities frowned at ladies playing football.

**I**n our Sports Personality Section today, we took time to interview one of the -most travelled Coaches in the Country, Anthony Mdluli. We engaged him on his background as a football Instructor, climbing up the ladder to the position of National Team Coach for Sihlangu.

**SM:** Hmmm...the great thing is that you unearthed new talent, nurtured it and exposed it to greater opportunities. How does that make you feel?

**AM:** I feel great when I reflect on a number of girls who have benefited from being part of the project. At EFA we have Ms. Spongile Skaggel who works as Women Development Officer. She started with me at kaShile many other girls are in the Forces team from the School Ladies soccer. The talent nurtured through Schools ladies tournaments are forming a big portion of national team players and clubs now recruit from the schools' project.

**SM:** Well, I know the attitude and perspective of other social commentators would say what is a Male doing in a female domain? How did you deal with the negativity around you as a male coach mentoring females?

**AM:** Sports have no gender in my opinion so the perception that males should stay out from coaching females is out of order. What is key is professionalism when doing your job. You need to treat your players as mere athletes not just as women or females. You need to be passionate with the job as there is a lot of negativity when you coach Ladies as a male because most people perceive females as 'sex objects' thus cannot accept that a male is genuinely coaching.

**SM:** Well, the great thing is that you are a teacher by profession. How do you juggle around being a teacher in a class and a football Coach with so many responsibilities?

**AM:** It is very demanding because both jobs require full attention especially the teacher's side as that is your life job, first. You need to be dedicated: try to be ahead in your work so that students are not affected especially when on national duty as a Coach. Sometimes you need to

make time for your students during Saturdays or holidays to make up for the lost time. You also need to have good relations with your Department so that they can take care of your students if on coaching duty.

**SM:** I have always wanted to ask this question: many educators out there are Coaches. What is the trick Mr. Mdluli? What is the pulling factor?

**AM:** Coaching is teaching. You need to impart information and as a teacher you already have pedagogical ability, you know how to teach, you also understand human behaviour because coaching is about developing a code of behaviour from an individual and team to perform better than the opponent. Teachers have a history of coaching as modern game has been greatly influenced by teachers.

**SM:** You have held the Position of being the Chairperson of the Swaziland Football Coaches Association [SFCA]. What are the challenges faced by Coaches in the country?

**AM:** The main challenge faced by coaches in Eswatini is that coaching and coaches are not embraced by people and the owners of clubs. People do not believe in the importance of coaches because everyone knows football yet we cannot all be experts. Coaching needs time and patience and a coach cannot succeed in a day. You need to cultivate a philosophy before you could deliver results; unfortunately, we want results now. Our challenge as coaches is the desire of instant results yet that is impossible to achieve all the time. Another challenge is that we are part-timers in the job so our performances are dwarfed by that.

**SM:** On the 29th of December 2018, whilst opening a Workshop for Coaches at the Caritas in Manzini. You said these words That "We must stand up to control the media." What did you mean by these words and what is it that was a serious concern with you with regard to the Media?



The Coach meeting the MoET Minister in one of his assignments.

**AM:** The media has great impact on thinking of the people. If they are free to write inaccurately, they may mislead. If they write objectively, they can contribute positively. Sometimes issues are inaccurately reported and sometimes the media is sentimental so any information given to the media must be in writing so that it is accurate. We need media to promote our activities

**SM:** Well, we have seen you climb up the ladder in coaching to the point of becoming the Sihlangu Head Coach. Tell us about what inspired you to become a football Coach?

**AM:** I started coaching in 1991 when I started working as a teacher. I was inspired by Bizzah Mkhonta and Mr. Howe former headteacher at kaShile. Later I met coaches like Myengwa Sibandze and veteran Mr. Fritz Madala Seilbea who all mentored me as a coach. I coached at junior level, Regional level and at national level. Started coaching training in around 1993 to date I have acquired CAF and FIFA certificates as coach and Instructor. Done CAF Instructorship in General Coaching and FIFA Instructorship in General Coaching and in Goalkeeping. Have worked as a National Team coach, Sitsebe, for a long time and will now and again assist National Team coaches in Goalkeeping and general coaching. In essence, my inspiration mainly is personal desire to be top coach and to reach high level in coaching, following footsteps of my mentors and local and international role models.

**SM:** You have climbed up the ladder so fast in the football coaching fraternity. In 2015, it was announced that you shall manage the Swaziland U17 squad at the 2015 COSSASA Games in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. In August 2016, you were named head coach of Manzini Wanderers. In 2017, you were appointed manager of Swaziland.

namely Amawele, Shepherds Ngwazini my boyhood team, Tinyosi then Manzini Wanderers. My mandate at Wanderers was to help team survive relegation which we achieved. Then in 2017 I applied and interviewed for National Team post. Got shortlisted and was among top five [5] coaches but the job was eventually won by Pieter de Jongh as the first Swazi coach who was among the shortlisted de Jongh recommended me to be his Assistant. When he left, I became Interim head coach. My first match as headcoach was against Namibia where we won 1-0. Our Second match was against Seychelles where we drew 0-0. Our third game was against Kenya where we won 1-0 then in Cosafa, we lost to Lesotho 1-0: Botswana lost 2-0 My toughest assignment was against Tunisia and Egypt. We lost to Tunisia 2-0 Egypt lost 4-1 away and lost 2-0 home.

**SM:** I am particularly interested in the Sihlangu Post. How did it feel being in charge of the National Team and the challenges that come with the post?

**AM:** It was a great experience being in charge of the Senior Team. National team is a political team as everybody is interested and wants to say something but it is very important to remain respectful of the FA because the team belongs to them. I started well with the team but going into COSAFA there were a lot of negativity led by the media and a club which I cannot mention for ethical reasons. There was a lot of backbiting at Polokwane and the 'go slow' which led to the two [2] defeats. Our performance against Tunisia and Egypt was satisfactory to me and both teams are top in Africa but we managed them. To Manage a National Team, you need to be strong and believe in your decision and stand for what you believe in. I wanted to change and bring new players which I did and presented a squad made out of players I introduced in the senior squad.

You replaced by Pieter de Jongh, before returning to the job in March 2018 as a caretaker. You were replaced by Kosta Papić in December 2018. In January 2019, you were appointed manager of Manzini Sea Birds. Take us through the journey.

**AM:** I have spent quite a lot of time coaching at regional level because I did not want to rush to top league so I acquired experience with regional teams

**SM:** Hmm...do you have a special moment in your role as the Head Coach of Sihlangu that you'll never forget.

**AM:** The match against Egypt in Cairo. It was toughest match but we did not surrender: fought till the end. And our second match with them was also good. I was personally satisfied with our tactical discipline even though we lost.

**SM:** Well, tough indeed! What, in your independent opinion, needs to be done to improve football in the country to an extent that the National Team can compete effectively, at least, in Regional Football Competitions?

**AM:** We need to improve at team level. It is high time all teams become fully professional. Once that happens, national team will compose of well equipped players. The standard at team level is low. Players reach national level still lagging behind in some critical areas. Football should be taken serious at junior and regional level. Teams must employ coaches and provide them with all necessities of the game. School games should also be supported.

**SM:** Just recently, the National Team Coach, Dominic Kunene, elevated you from the position of goalkeeper coach to Assistant Coach. Did that surprise you? Were you surprised and how do you look forward to work with the Head Coach?

**AM:** I did not anticipate that. I was surprised when he hinted on the idea even though I had been a goalkeeper coach. Kunene was always open to our contribution as coaches because goalkeeping is my second specialisation. We are going work collectively in achieving one goal of success.

**SM:** Well, thank you Mr. Mdluli for taking your time to talk to us. It has been great having you here at the SNAT Media. We wish you all the best in your football coaching career.

**AM:** Thank you. I appreciated talking to you.

**SM:** Thank you Sir.



The Coach taking the Sihlangu Players through the paces at Somhlolo National Stadium in 2019.

# Schools Sports in the Covid-19 Era



**Thabiso Langa**

Sports Analyst



Executive Members of ESSA receiving E45 360.00 from ESA CEO, Phil Mnisi for the successful running of the 2018 Schools National Athletics Competition on the 26th of April 2018 [Courtesy photo].

Dealing with Covid-19 has been exhausting on everyone. It has closed down schools and businesses, rendered many people jobless, took away our loved ones and basically put everyone's lives on hold. While there are plans to safely reopen schools no one seems to bother about how to safely play school sports. It is a forgotten yet significant part of the school calendar.

We all know that for most students' school isn't just about academics, it is also about social interaction and extracurricular activities. Many students enjoy participating in sports, music, school plays and a variety of other activities. While many students are worried about the effect of school closure on their ability to obtain good grades thus being able to qualify for tertiary admission, some are worried about the reality of forfeiting their opportunity to show case their talents in schools' sports competitions.

Many will miss their last chance of representing their schools in the different sporting codes. For the students, schools' sports also afford them the opportunity to impress scouts from the different sporting disciplines. It is an open secret that many students who participate in sports look to be recruited by the teams from the armed forces, thus increasing their chances of being employed.

Will those learners return to school when schools reopen? Will they not dropout upon realising that there would be no extracurricular activities? These are fundamental questions that we must give serious consideration.

The government must wake up from her deep slumber and start taking sports seriously. The government needs to



Learners celebrating an achievement after defeating their opponents in a football match [Courtesy photo].

change her attitude towards sports to ensure that she has realistic and up-to-date policies that will make careers in sports sustainable and rewarding. Other than in Swaziland, sports is a booming industry internationally which employs large numbers of people and generates huge revenues either directly in sports themselves or indirectly through associated activities, all of which contributes not only to the eradication of poverty but also to

improving the living standards.

activities, particularly sports infrastructure in schools. Otherwise the future of schools sports is under threat as more and more schools (primary schools in particular) withdraw from participating in ESSA organised competitions.

# note to self



## NOTE TO SELF

By Vilimile Gumede

Did you ever care that Jesus is the Way?  
 “Anginandzaba naloJesus, now get out my way!  
 Nginetikwenedi that I'm busy trying to pay!”  
 Awunanzaba naloJesus I should get away?  
 Okay! Note to Self.

First things first, I've got to get some things straight:  
 Are you indispensable and way to great?  
 To ask a couple of questions about your mom and dad  
 Why were you conceived, and why were you born?  
 Uma bashona, bashonaphi and is this a thorn?  
 Note to Self.

How did they grow up, and how did they meet?  
 What did they believe and what was on their scoresheet?  
 Did they ever care what the future would hold?  
 Did they ever care to keep you safe from the cold?  
 Noma batsatsa tiki nasheleni  
 Betsemba kutsi indilinga will come through ...  
 For you?

Ungumuntfu, uyaphila  
 Situkulu, hhayi insila  
 Imfucuta, siyayiphika  
 Tstats' umculu, utawuphila  
 and here's why:  
 Note to Self ...

alpha, sigma, beta theta human gods – constructs  
 Alpha and Omega open heart – tear ducts  
 When I consider what He's done for me – yin' ungatsi  
 Ngyehluleka kuthula awutsi ngitjele umphakatsi.

Opened the gate between worlds with creation – Eden,  
 Eden minus two trees plus choice – even,  
 Bantfu ngeke bakhone kugcina tetsembiso – eveni  
 You bargained with the son of the morning and now you're leaving  
 You left with a blessing and then a curse – stay cleaving  
 Hard work, labour pains, you have to stay cleaving  
 Note to Self.

Sodom and Gomorrah never cared, they burned  
 After Noah people drowned in the water, they turned  
 Drew a rainbow in the sky as a promise – to you  
 Now it's switched for agendas getting taught in schools?

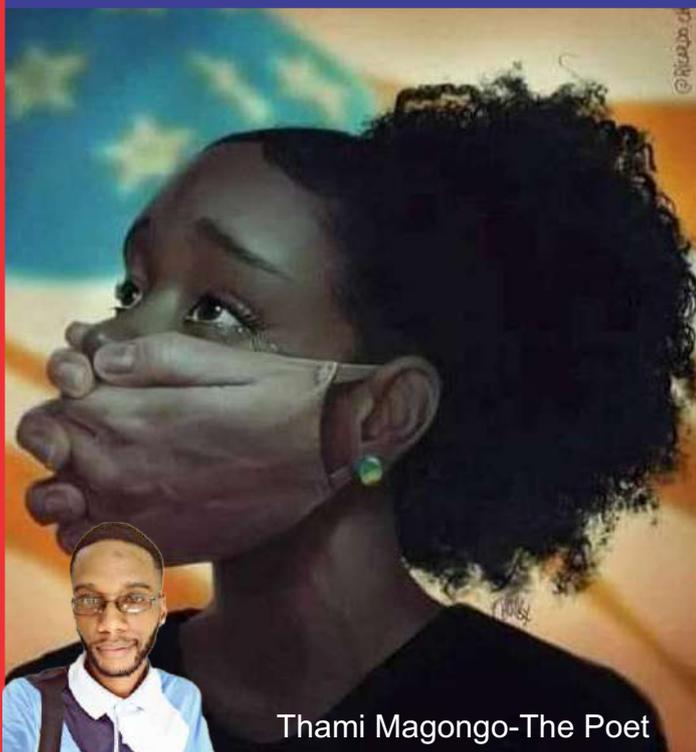
Today if you disagree with agendas you're a fool  
 “It's just colours to a rainbow, kantsi yini – are you a fool?”  
 Yes I am!

Well, I'm a fool for Christ:  
 Bayahleka, bayakhala, on the cross He dies  
 Batsi buka, bhu phansi, three days He'll rise  
 Lalela Sathane ...  
 Surprise, surprise!

Holy Spirit came after, he was there from the beginning,  
 Gave them comfort, gives us life and he will shield us from sinning,  
 Daily struggles, weekly battles but we have to stay winning.  
 It was never about goons milking money from the Church,  
 Or rambling in consonants then turn around to call it 'tongues',  
 Never about that thief in the church calling you 'son'  
 Or screaming “I am blessed” and lying that “The victory's won”.

Cala kahle, ekucaleni – have faith and believe,  
 He rewards those who seek Him, noma bafa like Stephen,  
 he died and rose again, despite what we might perceive.  
 Five degrees, real wealth – kuhle konkhe loko,  
 Kepha ufikaphi uma ungatisi uyihlo nenyoko?

One life – on earth, chose wisely – choose right.  
 Take your care, all your problems – every burden you've been having,  
 Leave it all, on the cross – stay focused, get to heaven.  
 Vilimile Gumede, a Poet from Mantjolo in the Kingdom of Eswatini.  
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Thami Magongo-The Poet

## I was wronged

I cannot keep it  
 I do not want to keep it  
 I do not want to remember about that night  
 I still get nightmares and day mares  
 Then there's awkward conversations  
 About termination being evil and immoral  
 So immoral it will haunt me for the rest of my days  
 I have enough depressing things in my life  
 I am scared  
 Reality keeps whispering the scariest things to me  
 And the thing about reality is  
 It's still there waiting for me in the morning  
 What do I want, really?  
 Let me vent, get it all out  
 I am a sexual assault victim  
 The system does not have a conscious  
 I am not an offender  
 I do not want a baby, at least not right now  
 At least not in this pretty dark place  
 What is the future of a baby with a baby on it's way?  
 I do not need your judgment, how much worse do you want this to get?  
 In case you didn't notice  
 This world is full of souls who wish they had never saw  
 The light of day of this earth

A man asks a farmer near a field, "Sorry sir, would you mind if I crossed your field instead of going around it? You see, I have to catch the 4:23 train." The farmer says, "Sure, go right ahead. And if my bull sees you, you'll even catch the 4:11 one."

Dentist warns his patient, "This might be a bit painful."  
Patient: "That's OK, I'll handle it."  
The dentist sighs, "For a while now, I've been having an affair with your wife."

**53. At an interview: "So you'd be starting off at 20 000, but later on it can go up to 40 000."  
"Excellent, I'll start later on."**

A police recruit was asked during an exam, "What would you do if you had to arrest your own mother?" The reply, "Call for backup".

Two guys are out hunting in the woods when one of them collapses. He doesn't appear to be breathing, his eyes are glazed over. The other man pulls out his phone with trembling fingers and calls 911. He gasps, "My friend is dead! What can I do?" The operator says "Please stay calm. I will help you. First of all, let's make sure he's dead." There's a silence, then a gunshot. The guy gets back on the phone and says "OK, now what?"

A little boy kills a butterfly.  
Dad says, "No butter for two weeks!"  
The little boy kills a honeybee  
Dad says, "No honey for two weeks!"  
LITTLE SHARPOUSE ON THE POINTE® FR  
Mom kills a cockroach.  
The little boy turns to his Dad and says,  
"Are you gonna tell her or should I do it?"





# 2020

## SNAT MEDICAL AID NOTES

# SWAZILAND NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS MEDICAL AID

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Website: [www.swazimed.com](http://www.swazimed.com)

TTOs (Facility fee, consultation and medicine Inpatient General Practitioner Consultations	443 100% SPL 100% SPL 622 870 1,117	per admission   MO M1 M2+
Alternatives to Hospitalisation (Step down nursing Facilities, Private Nursing Frail care, Hospice & Physical rehabilitation in hospital) Private nursing - normal consultation is paid as long as the benefit is available even if there is no authorisation acquired.	9,454	per family
IMMUNE DEFICIENCY (related to HIV/AIDS) (Services, Materials, Medicines) Limited to acute medicine and consultation benefit, 3 months exclusion	100% SPL	
MEDICINES & INJECTION MATERIAL Chronic Medicines Asthma, hypertension and diabetes	100% Cost  1,054 2,108 2,635	  M0 M1 M2+
Acute Medicines Pharmacy Advised Therapy (OTC) Within acute medicine limit Schedule 0. 1 and 2 only	Subject to OHEB Subject to OHEB 548 870 1,128 195	 Subject to OHEB M0 M1 M2+ per script
Contraceptives (oral) Within OHEB MENTAL HEALTH, in and out of hospital	90 100% SPL 2,097	per script  per family
MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS In hospital NON SURGICAL PROCEDURES AND TESTS In Hospital Out of Hospital (Sleep Studies is paid only when authorised) limited to 1 study per family	100% SPL 100% SPL 100% SPL	
OPTOMETRY Frames, Lenses, Readers One in 2 year claiming period, align ti benefit year (12 month exclusion) Refractionist	Subject to OHEB 474 1001	M0 M1

Eye examinations (Restricted to specific service provider)	One beneficiary per annum
ORGAN TRANSPLANTS For pathology & radiology the separate benefit limits apply	100%SPL
ONCOLOGY Radiotherapy and Chemotherapy (including medicine, radiology and pathology) Brachytherapy (within oncology limit above)	100%SPL 100%SPL
PATHOLOGY AND MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY In Hospital Out of Hospital	100%SPL 311 per admission Subject to OHEB
PHYSIOTHERAPY AND BIOKINETICS In Hospital (Only applicable when there is a referring doctor)	100%SPL 348 M0 701 M1 1,412 M2+
Out of Hospital PREGNANCY CONFINEMENT Hospitalisation Accommodation, Theatre Fees, Labour Ward Fees, Drugs, Dressings, Medicines and materials) Physic willmonly be applicable to post caesarean cases during hospital stay. Abnormal vaginal delivery will be considered for physiotherapy on application and authorisation	100%SPL 100%SPL 100%SPL 11,594 Per Family
Global fee for delievery Within Maternity limit above Services (Consultations, Visits & Scans Ante-natal consults are from the Consultation benefit and scans from Radiology benefit and scans are limited to two	100%SPL 2,951 Per Family 100%SPL 2X post-natal midwife consultation/pregnancy 100% cost
PROSTHESIS Internal (e.g. Knee & Hip Replacements, etc) - Surgically implanted External (includes External Fixators)	1,760 Per Family 2,129 Per Family
RENAL DIALYSIS RADIOLOGY & RADIOGRAPHY In Hospital General and Specialised (including CT Scans, MRI Scans etc)	No Benefit 100%SPL 1,486 Per Family Subject to OHEB
Out of Hospital PET SCAN and PET-CT Scans	Subject to OHEB 1 per family per annum

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The SNAT Platform



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