



MICT Update

JAN-MARCH
2024 Edition

IN-HOUSE NEWSLETTER



MICT GETS NEW LEADERSHIP

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Greetings colleagues and esteemed readers,

As we bid farewell to March, we mark the end of the fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2023-2024. In the same vein, we celebrate Namibia's 34th independence anniversary that took place in the Zambezi region.

This quarter has been a period of reflection, growth, and renewed dedication to our common mandate, mission, and vision as a ministry. At the beginning of the year, former MICT Minister Peya Mushelenga laid out a visionary plan, highlighting the critical role of ICT as a catalyst for empowerment and progress. Ministerial staff were urged to foster an environment conducive to information dissemination and technological advancement, and to serve the Namibian people with steadfast dedication.

February brought a profound transition with the passing of our beloved President H.E. Dr. Hage Geingob. In the wake of national mourning, we ushered in a new era of leadership and progress with the appointment of Minister Emma Theofelus and Deputy Minister Modestus Amutse by President Nangolo Mbumba, who took office following the untimely death of President Geingob. This demonstrates a commitment to continuity in carrying out the ministry's mandate. The new leadership vows to lead MICT to greater heights in terms of ICT empowerment and growth.

Throughout the quarter, we engaged in strategic reflection and planning as well as aligning our actions with ministerial objectives to ensure excellence in our endeavours. The ministry held an inaugural communication conference as a platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing among government communication officials and other experts. This highlights our collective responsibility to uphold public service ethics and leverage communication tools for transparency,

accountability, and public participation.

Furthermore, our regional offices continued their vital role in promoting digital literacy through community initiatives, thereby providing Namibians with essential technology skills.

In keeping with our commitment to developing talent in the film industry, the Namibia Film Commission awarded bursaries to aspiring filmmakers. The initiative not only promotes academic accomplishments but also fosters creativity and innovation in our growing film industry, thereby contributing to our country's cultural and economic enrichment.

They say "appreciation improves productivity". Our newly appointed Minister Emma Theofelus expressed gratitude to staff through a kapana session. The session serves as a motivation to us, to maintain and improve our great performance and commitment to serve with honesty, compassion, and professionalism.

Finally, I would like to congratulate and welcome all new staff who joined the MICT family this quarter and those who were promoted to new positions.

I have only given you a synopsis of what is contained in the pages of MICT Update, please take time to read all our articles.



Asteria Ndjendja
Editor



NEW LEADERSHIP - MICT's new Minister, Emma Theofelus and her Deputy Modestus Amutse on the day of their appointments. To the left is MICT outgoing Minister Peya Mushelenga, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Works and Transport John Mutorwa with Chief Justice Peter Shivute. **Photo by Petrus Katonyala**

MICT gets new leadership

By **Ngaearue Katjangua**

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology has seen a change in leadership as former Deputy Minister Emma Theofelus takes on the role of Minister, deputised by veteran journalist and Member of Parliament Modestus Amutse.

President Nangolo Mbumba announced their appointments shortly after taking the highest office following the death of President Hage Geingob.

Theofelus replaced former ICT Minister Peya Mushelenga who succeeded Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwa (now Vice

President) at the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation.

Speaking at the appointment ceremony, Theofelus said while she may be the first young person to occupy the ICT Minister Portfolio, the Namibian government has appointed young people of her age in other portfolios before whose experience she can emulate.

"This did not just begin with me, Prime Minister Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila was made Director General at the age of 27, which I am, so I have people who came

before that I can reflect on and emulate," Minister Theofelus said.

She added that there are also young Ministers on the continent she can reach out to and learn from. "We have seen young Ministers on the continent I can reach out to, as I have done before, to learn about their journey and how I can add value to this portfolio and serve the people as a young person at this level of government."



ICT tool for empowerment and development – Mushelenga

Dr Peya Mushelenga *Photo by Mercia Windwaai*

By **Vilho Hangula**

Information former Minister Peya Mushelenga said information and communication technology (ICT) should be a tool for empowerment and development. He said this in January while welcoming the Ministry's staff members from the holiday.

He said ICT represents an enormous opportunity for development and that staff members should work hard to harness this opportunity. "I hope that you returned from the holiday with renewed energy to serve the Namibian people in our respective roles by creating an enabling environment for information dissemination and communication technology," he said.

Mushelenga said the Ministry has done a lot in the previous year and should build on the already existing excellence to foster a competitive communication sector where the prices of data are reduced and access to the internet is affordable. To this end, the former

Minister acknowledged the importance of ICT as an enabler for socioeconomic development. "ICT brings about major breakthroughs in both agriculture and finance, by optimising production and advancing financial inclusion," he said. It's based on this that the Ministry has equipped rural ICT centres with free internet to bridge the digital divide in remote areas.

Furthermore, Mushelenga highlighted the progress made during 2023 by the Ministry, including expanding the fibre optic cable to bridge the digital divide and improving broadcasting capability by NBC for wider reach to optimise information dissemination across the country. He seized the moment to announce that there will be no further extension of SIM card registrations. "By December 2023, Namibia had 2 387 777 active SIM cards, of which 1 694 744 (70.97%) had been registered. I urge Namibians to go and register their cards," he said.

At the same event, then Deputy Minister Emma Theofelus reminded employees of their duty to serve the public. Executive Director Audrin Mathe closed the event emphasising that 2024 is indeed a year of expectations when the Ministry is expected to deliver on its mandate. Mathe told public enterprises that fall under the Ministry that they are part of the MICT team. "You are part of the family carrying out the delegated responsibilities of the government," he said. He thanked them for their contributions to the government's agenda.

The 2024 MICT staff welcoming event was attended by all MICT employees in the Khomas Region, with MICT regional staff members attending virtually. Heads of NBC, New Era Publishing Corporation, Namibia Press Agency, and Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia, amongst others, also attended.

MICT HOSTS MANAGEMENT RETREAT



IN SESSION - MICT management retreat at Swakopmund. *Photo by Emmency Nuukala*

By **Moses Haufiku**

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology held a week-long management retreat at Swakopmund at the end of January to draw up the ministerial annual plan and staff performance agreements for 2024.

Former Minister of Information and Communication Technology Peya Mushelenga said this year's retreat is built on the theme 'The Year of Expectations'. This theme is in line with what the late President Hage Geingob christened the year 2024 in his New Year's message in January.

In addition, Mushelenga said the Ministry is expected to increase operational efficiency both at the head office and regional offices. "We need to ensure that there is efficiency in our performance agreements and appraisals where key targets are set either for management or below

management staff, to achieve our objectives," he noted.

He further said the Ministry has a mammoth task to implement policies and programmes and to ensure that both the Data Protection Bill and the Cybercrime Bill have sailed through Parliament this year so that citizens can be guaranteed that their data cannot enter the hands of those who abuse it, and to protect institutions and individual end users from cyber-attack. In addition, the Ministry is also expected to finalise the exercise of SIM cards registration this year, to ensure that there are no anonymous card users who are hiding behind this anonymity to commit crime.

Mushelenga concluded by emphasising the importance of providing good leadership to staff members to guide them, provide strategic direction, and capacitate them so that they can perform to the best of their

ability. "The training budget should be optimally utilised for the training that will make a meaningful contribution to the performance of the Ministry, not just spent money because it has been provided for and ends up training for the sake of training, we want to see the end-result from it."

The reflection and planning retreat is very important for the Ministry to review its operations and performance in order to optimise its performance, strengthen its management, and streamline its activities and programmes to its resources in order to achieve its objectives and goals as outlined in the ministerial annual plan. This retreat preceded the 2024-2025 budget allocation to the Ministry of N\$702 445 million, an increase from last year's allocation of N\$651 445 million. The retreat was attended by the ministerial executive management, directors and deputies, as well as regional heads.



FAMILY PHOTO - Former ICT Minister, Peya Mushelenga, current ICT Minister Emma Theofelus and Executive Director Audrin Mathe with MICT management at Swakopmund.
Photo by Emmency Nuukala



IN TRAINING - Community members undergoing basic computer literacy training at Otavi. The training is offered by the Otjozondjupa MICT Regional Office

Regional MICT offices enhance digital literacy skills

By **Tuwilica Kahuika**

As part of executing the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology's (MICT) mandate, regional offices are hard at work promoting digital literacy through their computer literacy training programme and free internet access initiatives for local community members.

The Otjozondjupa MICT regional office has just completed its regional basic computer literacy training programme, which they have been conducting in the region since 2022. The basic computer literacy initiative was launched in 2022 by then Deputy Minister Emma Theofelus in Tsumkwe and was carried out in all seven constituencies of the Otjozondjupa region thus far, where approximately 182 trainees have been trained.

The need for digital literacy skills in the region remains evident from the overwhelming response from the community to the training applications. In Otavi, the second most recent training

conducted, there were over 160 applications, of which only 32 could be accommodated, thus there is still a considerably high need for continuing the computer literacy training in the region. For this reason, the second phase of the training programme is expected to start in the 2024-2025 financial year and will target different towns in the region. The training consists of two weeks and focuses on basic computer literacy, targeting different participants from different towns, according to Senior Information Officer Christopher Muhapi. Muhapi says the fact that they have a very low dropout rate from those that start the training further indicates participant commitment and acts as motivation for continuing the training in the upcoming financial year.

In the Kavango West Region, the MICT office has been successfully operating a free internet café since 2022, where they offer free internet and computer access to community members. Though there

are only seven computers available, after the recent procurement of three additional computers for the community, those with laptops and cellphones are able to connect to the free Wi-Fi at the MICT offices, which is open to the public daily between 08h00 and 16h30. Information Officer, Nambara Stefanus says the response from the community members is quite overwhelming, especially because the services are free, adding that on a busy day, the internet café can have more than 25 users, with some even occupying space on the outside of the building. Stefanus says the internet café is mostly used by students and youth, while one can also witness the general public using the facilities from time to time. In this regard, there is an indication that more equipment is needed in the regions to continue providing digital literacy and access to internet facilities for community members.

NFC awards bursaries in film field

By  *Tuwilica Kahuika*

The Namibia Film Commission (NFC) has this year awarded bursaries to three students studying film-related courses as part of promoting film development in Namibia.

The bursaries were awarded under the NFC Film Bursary programme aimed at supporting aspiring filmmakers in Namibia by providing financial support in academic programmes related to motion picture production.

NFC's Executive Secretary Florence Haifene says allocating bursaries to students goes beyond paying for student fees and acts as a strategic investment in emerging talents to strengthen the foundation of the local film industry, in line with the NFC's vision of creating a sustainable and dynamic filmmaking ecosystem in Namibia.

The three bursary recipients for this year are Venecia Shanjenka, Bognahn Moller and Rikambura Kaiuina. These recipients are in addition to six students enrolled at the College of the Arts and one student at Africa Film Drama Art (AFDA) in South Africa that are already receiving financial support from the NFC, bringing to a total of 10 students receiving funding for the 2024-2025 financial year.

Haifene adds that funding students in the film industry helps to develop a film sector with "skilled professionals who can compete on both national and international stages." This can foster a culture whereby art as an industry is valued more and artists are recognised for what they are worth; therefore, the NFC will continue developing capacity that will help shape the film industry's continued success.



MICT reforms ICT laws



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT - DICTD Director Linda Aipinge at a stakeholders' consultative engagement in Windhoek in January. *Photo by Petrus Katonyala*

By  Ngaevarue Katjangua

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology is finalising the draft ICT Bill by consolidating existing ICT laws and policies to foster digital transformation.

Some of the laws and policies to be consolidated include the Telecommunications Policy, Broadcasting Policy, Postal Policy, IT Policy, and the Overcharging Information Communication Technology Policy, to name a few.

ICT Development Director

Linda Aipinge said the finalised draft ICT Bill is envisioned to be tabled in Parliament before April 2024. She said this in January during a stakeholder engagement in Windhoek.

The gist of the proposed consolidated law is to reform the sector into an innovative and inclusive digital ecosystem. According to the draft policy, the policies under review have become obsolete and limited to effectively executing the Communications Act of

2009 and creating ICT-driven innovations.

Aipinge said the Ministry embarked on reviewing and consolidating policies following the blessing of the National Planning Commission.

"The proposed bill will consolidate the obsolete policies, close in on gaps, and foster digital transformation in the country," Aipinge said.



INAUGURAL - ICT Minister Emma Theofelus and Executive Director Audrin Mathe at the first-ever communication conference at Katima Mulilo. *Photo by Petrus Katonyala*

MICT hosts maiden communication conference

By  Rachel Nghimulitete

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) hosted its inaugural annual Public Entities Communication and Public Relations Conference at Katima Mulilo in Zambezi Region from 12-14 March 2024.

At the event that was held under the theme "Bridging the Gap through Communication," Zambezi Governor Alfea Sampofu welcomed everyone and underlined how important communication is for development. After the

welcoming, Minister Emma Theofelus urged government communicators to uphold public service ethics while utilising communication tools to improve public communication.

Over the course of the conference's two days, a number of topics came up during discussions about public communication. The first day focused on encouraging a culture of communication among people as well as examining social media's potential and the ideals of effective

communication for a progressive state. On the second day, the emphasis was on good communication principles, including operationalising the Access to Information Law, media monitoring mechanisms, and the government information dissemination practices.

During round-table discussions and interventions, participants from various government ministries and organisations exchanged perceptive viewpoints and insights. The dedication to improving government communication was

demonstrated by each contribution, from the Lüderitz Town Council's presentation on communications strategy to the Auditor General's Office's emphasis on the necessity of coordinating strategies with development plans.

In the bid to maximise service delivery, talks also covered the interface between national, regional, and municipal governments, trying to clarify roles and responsibilities. Issues including unclear boundaries between authorities and stereotypes in the media were recognised, and demands for more coordination and

cooperation between government levels were made.

Throughout the conference, the importance of proactive communication, transparency, and accountability resonated strongly. Participants emphasised Namibia's need for consistent brand identity development, technology utilisation, and ongoing capacity growth. Delegates retired to a nearby island as the conference came to an end, not just to relax but also to continue productive conversations and exchange best practices.

The event was infused with

a collaborative atmosphere and a common vision for efficient government communication, laying the groundwork for future initiatives. The first-ever Public Entities Communication and Public Relations Conference was a momentous occasion in Namibia's progress towards promoting impactful, transparent, and responsive government communication.



Photo by Petrus Katonyala



LEADING - ICT Minister Emma Theofelus speaking during the ICT stakeholders' consultative meeting. *Photo by Mercia Windwaai*

MICT hosts 23rd ICT stakeholders' consultative meeting

By  **Tuwilica Kahuika**

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology held its 23rd ICT stakeholders' consultative meeting at the end of March in Windhoek, which was attended by various ICT stakeholders and officiated by ICT Minister Emma Theofelus.

The stakeholders' meetings are aimed at providing a platform for the government and ICT industry to deliberate on key ICT developments, projects and initiatives.

Speaking at the meeting, Minister Theofelus announced that an amount of N\$110 million has been earmarked to implement the Universal Access Service initiative, which aims to roll

out 30 radio access network towers over three years. This initiative will bridge the digital divide in Namibia by providing access to network connections. An additional N\$20 million is earmarked for the establishment of the Namibia Cybersecurity Incidence Response Team (Nam-CSIRT) under the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN), while N\$1.5 million is allocated for the implementation of the 5G Strategy.

At the meeting, ICT Infrastructure Development Deputy Director Fillemon Johannes highlighted other ongoing projects aimed at developing the ICT sector in the country, such as the National Cybersecurity

Strategy and Awareness Creation Plan, Internet Exchange Point Association, National Digital Strategy, the consolidation of the ICT policies, and the annual National ICT Summit scheduled to take place later in the year. Johannes updated stakeholders on the drafting of the Data Protection Bill, which is at the final stage with regional consultations completed as well as a validation workshop. The draft bill has been presented to top management and is ready for presentation to Cabinet, while the Cybercrime Bill is still in the drafting stage pending provisions from the United Nations Convention to be incorporated in the bill.

Minister thanks staff with kapana session



GRATITUDE - Information and Communication Technology Minister Emma Theofelus treating staff to a Kapana session in Windhoek as a token of appreciation for work well done. **Photo by Petrus Katonyala**

By **Moses Haufiku**

Information Minister Emma Theofelus treated staff members to a kapana session at Single Quarters as a token of appreciation for their work during the state memorial and burial of the late President Hage Geingob.

Only those staff members, who worked to coordinate during the mourning, memorial and burial periods of the late President were thanked for their efforts at the kapana session. Minister

Theofelus praised the staff for playing an important role in communicating information to the public through various platforms, such as the Government Communication Centre, X, Facebook, and other social media platforms, about the various proceedings as the nation mourns the late President.

"Tonight's appreciation dinner dedicated to the staff members is a small token, but I think a necessary one,

to recognise your important contributions that each of you unwaveringly made during the nation's mourning period," she said.

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology is responsible for disseminating government information. It is also responsible for the promotion and publicity of national events.





REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Ministry of Information and Communication Technology

PROMOTED



Asteria Ndjendja
Chief Media Officer
PMA

NEW APPOINTMENT



Erastus Ndawedwapo
Media Officer
AVM & ROs

PROMOTED



Annely Kamukwanyama
Senior Administrative
Officer
ICTD

NEW APPOINTMENT



Patience Mureti
Media Officer
AVM

NEW APPOINTMENT



Petrus Murongo
Media Officer
AVM & ROs

NEW APPOINTMENT



Nancy Halweendo
Media Officer
AVM

NEW APPOINTMENT



Tjingairi Tjipetekera
Media Officer
AVM

TRANSFERRED



Evangeline Kamati
Information Officer
AVM & ROs

WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME OUR NEW COLLEAGUES ABOVE WHO JOINED OUR MICT FAMILY DURING THIS QUARTER.



Republic of Namibia

MICT Update