



# NUST BRIEF

## New programmes in Procurement Management

NUST, the University of Namibia, and the Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management (NIPAM), have joined hands to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the country's procurement system.

The parties entered into an agreement, that will enhance the skills of employees in the procurement sector, by offering courses in the field.

In support of the project, the Ministry of Finance availed funding to the tune of N\$550 000.

Penda Ithindi, an Economic Advisor from the Ministry highlighted that the cash injection would be utilised for the conceptualisation, curriculum and course content development. "The assortment of skills to be acquired through this targeted programme resonates well with the national objectives of human capacity development in general and specific skills in public procurement management in particular," he said.

The programmes comprise of a certificate; an advanced Diploma; a Bachelor Degree; and a Postgraduate Diploma in Procurement Management.

"Institutions of higher learning have the

collective responsibility to provide capacity building through research, innovation and offering courses that are relevant," NUST Vice-Chancellor, Dr Eroid Naomab emphasised.

The collaboration will see the three institutions sharing resources such as staff and facilities, furthermore, promoting collaborative research activities.

"It comes naturally that we form part of this collaboration. Together, we will create, firstly, competency for the people that are going to be given service in this field. Secondly, we are creating a career path for them to progress where ever they set sail," Prof Kenneth Matengu, the UNAM Vice-Chancellor elaborated.



The signatories of the agreement flanked by members of the media. Left to right: Prof Kenneth Matengu, UNAM Vice-Chancellor; Penda Ithindi, Economic Advisor to the Minister; Maria Nangolo, Executive Director: NIPAM; and Dr Eroid Naomab, NUST Vice-Chancellor.



*"I have been privileged to serve the Institution in various capacities where I made my humble contribution, with limited resources and under difficult circumstances" – Neavera Tjivikua*

## Institutional Planner marks silver jubilee ...by bidding farewell to NUST

When she started working at the Institution, it was a mere remnant of Technikon Namibia, with approximately 100 staff members and 2 400 students. Today, a quarter of a century later, there numbers have swelled to about 700 staff members and over 10 000 students.

Neavera Tjivikua, recently retired from the University, but before she left, the former head of the Department of Institutional Planning, had an interview with NUST BRIEF, and went down memory lane.

**Q. What qualifications have you obtained over the years?**

**A.** I hold a Bachelor degree in Social Sciences from the University of Cape Town and a Master of Business Administration from the Management College of South Africa (MANCOSA). I am a lifelong-learner and through the years, I have completed courses in strategic planning; innovation; entrepreneurship; change management; and sustainability, to name a few.

**women and girls?**

**A.** You can be, do or have anything you desire in life. I am particularly passionate about women empowerment and youth development.

I am a certified coach in various areas such as Neuro-Linguistic Programming, which a pseudoscientific approach to communication, personal development, and psychotherapy as well as others. This has equipped me quite well to be life coach to a number of women.

**Q. What various roles did you assume before becoming a Director?**

**A.** I began my journey at the Institution as a Personal Assistant, and eventually I was appointed as the Director of Planning and International Relations. My responsibilities included the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the University's Strategic Plans; annual action plans; as well as the physical development plan of the University. In the same role, I significantly contributed to the establishment of the university's international footprint and reputation.

**Q. What was the highlight of your NUST Career?**

**A.** I cannot help but reflect on the origins of the then Polytechnic of Namibia, and subsequently its evolution into a University. I am particularly proud of the fact that I was part of a managing group that drafted the application for the re-designation and renaming of the institution and presented this case to several stakeholders.

I am also proud of the fact that I, in close collaboration with many dedicated colleagues, facilitated the development and implementation of four strategic plans as well as the concomitant cultural change in the institution.

The plans have laid the foundation for tremendous growth and achievement at the institution, and will forever serve as a benchmark for future reference.

I am satisfied that I did my best at all times and that, collectively, we had taken the University to a proper level of performance, reputation and respect.

**Q. What would your message be to young**

## Causing a research TReMOR at NUST

NUST, through the Project Services Unit (PSU), recently secured a project entitled Toolkit for Early-career Research Managers Online Resources, referred to as TReMOR, for short. The aim of this toolkit is to provide guidance on the support required by researchers when applying for national and international grants.

TReMOR will include online resources, guidelines, practical tools and learning offerings, such as workshops, webinars and/or podcasts. These will be centred around key areas of support throughout the pre and post-award processes. The team is also made up of colleagues from the UK (Cranfield University, De Montfort University and southern Africa (Stellenbosch University Botswana Open University, University of Witwatersrand and the University of Namibia).

Bas Rijnen, Projects Coordinator at PSU and Project Lead for the region, said "It is great to work closely with experienced peers to improve research support and management for national and international research impact." Moreover, the project will provide an opportunity for benchmarking and best practice development through the sharing of knowledge, expertise, and experiences. "This a strategic project for NUST as it will add value towards systems and tools to facilitate and enhance multi/inter/intra-

disciplinary research capacity, innovation and development in all fields of applied science and technology," said Rijnen.

The project co-led with Loughborough University, UK, forms part of the International Research Management Staff Development Programme, which is a collaboration between the African Academy of Sciences and the Association of Research Managers and Administrators, UK.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/tremor-project> or follow TReMOR on Twitter: @TReMORProject



# Preserving and protecting local indigenous languages

*Opinion piece by Prof Sarala Krishnamurty*



**Prof Sarala Krishnamurty, Professor in the Faculty of Humanities, Technical and Vocational Training.**

When the P3ICL team travelled to the villages in the Ruacana region to collect data, we came across two different groups who had diametrically opposing views about how to spell the name of the language that they speak. One group claimed that it had to be spelt with “z”, thus: Oluzemba, whereas the other group asserted that it had to be spelt with “dh”, thus: Oludhimba. Both groups felt very strongly about their claim and refused to give up their affiliation to a particular spelling.

If we examine the two names closely, as linguists, we can easily see where they come from. The Oluzemba has a closer proximity to Otjiherero, because the “z” alphabet is used by the Hereros and is pronounced with the “dh” sound, which is, as per the place and manner of articulation, closest to voiced dental fricative. On the other hand, Oludhimba would be closer to the Oshiwambo group of languages which do not have the letter “z”, but have the sound “dh”, as can be heard in the Kwanyama words: Dhimbua meaning to

Under the European-Union funded P3ICL project, myself and a number of researchers from the Faculty, have been working on protecting, preserving and promoting indigenous cultures and languages, since 2018. Our travels in the



**A young Ovadhimba mother with her baby.**

different regions of Namibia have given us an opportunity to meet different language groups. The Ovadhimba people who live in the Ruacana region provided us with an interesting case study. According to the Ethnologue, the Ovadhimba people are identified as Ovaherero, and it is believed that they are mountain dwellers who stayed behind during the migration, whereas the Ovahereros moved to the central parts of Namibia. As such, it is believed that they speak a chaste, pure deep version of Otjiherero, but the Ovadhimba people claim that their language is different.

forget; Dhenga meaning to hit or call; Dhiradhira meaning to think; and, Dhitika meaning to lie. There are many words, of course, but the ones mentioned are good examples to make my point.

Why am I discussing the spelling of one word in so much detail? It is closely linked to the geo-political identity of the Ovadhimba/Ovazemba people. The way they spell the word links them to two different ethnic groups, and in Namibia, it reveals alignment and association with either the majority in the population on the one hand, or a powerful



**Prof Haileleul Zeleke Woldemariam, an Associate Professor in the Communication Department at NUST (right) with an Ovadhimba family.**

minority on the other.

Since the P3ICL project concerns itself with data collection in the form of stories, folk tales, and legends, the difference in spelling did not matter hugely to us and we were guided by Pastor Johannes Tolu.

He has written more than ten books on the orthography of the Oludhimba language and also textbooks for school children on another project. Whatever may be the case, here is an amazing opportunity for experts in African indigenous languages in general and Namibian language experts to explore both the linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of these languages. Researchers at UNAM and NUST should take up these languages for analysis and generate good academic research and articles which could be used by the Ministry of Education and National Institute for Educational Development for



**Two Ovadhimba sisters.**



**Staff from the Faculty of Humanities, Technical and Vocational Training recently travelled to Ruacana, in the Omusati Region to collect data from the Ovadhimba community.**

policy decisions. The language policy of Namibia is a forward thinking and well-articulated document which states that local languages should be taught as mother a tongue from Grades one to five.

The P3ICL research team has rolled the ball; now our bright, young and passionate Master’s students should take this forward.

*\*The views and opinions expressed herein are purely that of the author.*



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