



WIDENING THE DISCOURSE



The Aftermath of the June 2021 Massacre

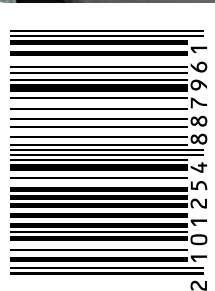
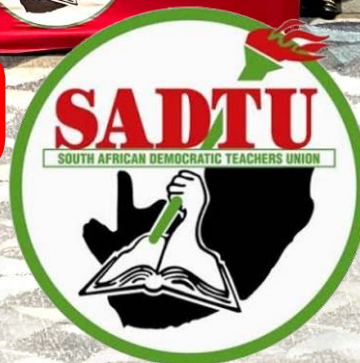


Ushering Schools to Online Learning



MAIN STORY

# SNAT Establishes Partnership with the



INSIDE

Eswatini Violates Fundamental Workers' Rights -



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The SNAT Union

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**Normal E480**

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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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**Mcolisi Motsa**
*The SNAT Editor*

# WE CANNOT LEAD FROM OUR HEADS

For a while now, the Union has existed with an identity crisis. Existed outside the precincts of a clear ideology and philosophy. We cannot, in the midst of such, act as if all is well. In any case, all Unions exist within a specific political ideology, which is the identity and colour of the organisation. We all agree that the Union cannot be led by feelings and sentiments of individuals. Leadership should exhibit a particular trait, a set of ethical ideas, principles and doctrines.

Freedman [2001] defines a political ideology 'as a set of ideas, beliefs, values, and opinions, exhibiting a recurring pattern that competes deliberately as well as unintentionally.' Political ideologies exist as formal systems of political thought. The adopted ideology of the SNAT will assist the General Membership [GM] to offer prescriptions for political arrangements and offer prescriptions for political actions. The adopted ideology will assist to organise political debates within the SNAT thus a coherent approach to issues.

To be frank, it is suicidal for the SNAT to be independent of any ideology. Most contemporary organisations agree on a uniform ideology that permeate the operations and policies of the organisation. The case of SADTU comes to my mind in this instance. In the case of SADTU, there is a clear

provision in their constitution that a Leader of the organisation should be a Member of the ANC. The SADTU makes it clear that an Executive Member should be an ANC Member. This is the catch. The SADTU desires to see a uniform character within the tier of Leadership thereat. We cannot do a copy and paste as a Union.

The Union cannot afford to depend on individual aptitude. We need an ideology that will organise our political

beliefs and beliefs. Our class-consciousness is incomplete with the Union not having embraced a particular belief system. This is an urgent matter that needs attention by all members of the organisation.





# ON THE LENSES







# ON THE LENSES





# NO MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS SINCE APRIL 2021 WITH THE GOVERNMENT



**SIKELELA DLAMINI**

SNAT Secretary General [SG]

**T**he Government of Swaziland, our employer of choice, continues to frustrate progress on all issues at the Joint Negotiations Forum (JNF). It is very much astounding that with three (3) months remaining in the current financial year, there has never been any meaningful JNF meeting since the year began in April 2021. This financial year a (2021) is a year in which the Government had committed to conduct a Salary Review exercise for her workers through the 06th July 2016 collective agreement that was then made an order of the court. This exercise was to also consider the review of allowances for workers.

When the Government requested that the Salary Review case be withdrawn from Court and the matter be taken back to the JNF, we all thought sanity had prevailed on the part of the employer. In our first meeting the Government clearly demonstrated that she was not ready to engage in talks around the Salary Review exercise. The Government refused to continue with negotiations because there was NAPSAWU, our sister union in the meeting arguing that they (Government and NAPSAWU) had unfinished

business that they had not settled.

As workers we failed to understand why a bilateral issue suddenly became one that affects progress at the JNF. It is important to note that for any JNF meeting to be correctly constituted, all four (4) Public Sector Unions must be represented and therefore the absence of one may mean that no negotiations or JNF meeting can continue. NAPSAWU is currently at loggerheads with the Government because the Government has abolished the ICT department and part of the Agriculture department. Fellow workers have been forced to retire. All this happened without consultations with the NAPSAWU. This is clearly not a JNF issue but a bilateral one. The conduct of the Government at the JNF was

meant to collapse the JNF again.

Since the refusal of the Government to implement the Salary Review is a breach of the 06-07-2016 order of Court, as PSAs we resolved to reinstate this matter in court. The PSAs convened a Joint General Council meeting for all the unions on Friday (03-12-2021) to deliberate on this matter, amongst others. Our members even think that it is better to the shift focus and demand a Cost of Living Adjustment [COLA]. That cannot be possible because we would be undermining the order of Court and rendering it of no effect. Any Salary Review exercise does consider the cost of living at that particular time. Comrades shall be updated on latest developments in due course of time.



Workers protesting for improved conditions of service  
[Courtesy of SNAT Media]



# PARALEGALS FUNDING



**SIKELELA DLAMINI**

SNAT Secretary General [SG]

**S**ince the establishment of the SNAT Legal Department, the organisation took a huge milestone in launching the SNAT Paralegals Programme. The SNAT Media engaged the SNAT Secretary General [SG] Comrade Sikelela Dlamini on the dimensions of the programme.

**S** NAT Media [SM] :  
Good day Comrade SG.

**SNAT SG [SSG]** : Comrade Editor, a very good day indeed.

**SM:** I recall in October 2020 we published an article where you articulated the introduction of the SNAT Paralegal Programme. In your view, how has the Programme been since its inception?

**SSG:** Thanks leadership. Yes! It is true. The establishment of the SNAT paralegal cadre was successful. We have a 25-member team which consists of the NEC and one (1) member from each of the fifteen [15] Branches. In my view, the process has been going on smoothly, although there were some hiccups due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which limited gatherings.

**SM:** Well, we can't agree more with you my Leader. If you can refresh our memory comrade SG, what informed the SNAT to establish such as critical department in the Organisation?

**SSG:** The SNAT is spending hundreds of thousands of Emalangenzi in Legal Fees every year. As a result, the organisation used to owe some Legal Firms money in excess of half a million and this militated against the fulfilment of other organisational duties since a large chunk of money was then directed to litigation processes. Due to the huge

union density of the SNAT, there has been also an increased in cases that needed the attention of lawyers. Even for basic things such as responding to a simple letter from the employer, we used to seek for legal assistance to ensure that we did not incriminate ourselves as members. It is such little things that then escalated the Legal Bill. In an endeavour to cut on this huge expense, the current SNAT NEC therefore decided to invest in the training of paralegals who will assist in solving the problems whilst still at infancy.

**SM:** Well, we've seen a number of workshops at the SNAT Centre where the SNAT Legal Officer was capacitating selected comrades from the fifteen [15] Branches of the SNAT. In your own assessment, how has the preamble of the Programme been? Are you achieving the pre-objectives?

**SSG:** The English adage which says "Rome was not Built in a Day" holds true for this process as well. As much

as the introductory process at the SNAT centre was helpful, there was a realisation to the fact that we need to deepen discussions and training on this subject so that we can produce a razor sharp paralegal cadre for the SNAT. But we can state with certainty that the pre-objectives of the trainings that were held at the SNAT were indeed met.

**SM:** Hmmm...Comrade SG, we heard through the grapevine that the SNAT received some funding on the paralegal programme. Can you confirm that my Leader?

**SSG:** Yes. It is true that as the SNAT we have received some funding from Education International, Africa Office, based in Ghana. This money shall be used to strengthen the Paralegal Department. We would not have done justice if we cannot thank our partners beyond our borders who have ensured that the SNAT gets financial support to strengthen her navigational systems.

**SM:** How do you intend to roll-out the Programme through the Funding my



Paralegals in a training at the SNAT Centre  
[Courtesy of the SNAT Media].

Leader? Which areas needs to be strengthened?

**SSG:** From Monday (27-12-2021) to Friday (31-12-2021), the SNAT paralegals were taken through an intensive training on various legal concepts through this funding. By now, we hope as early as the first week of January, 2022, our team will be better positioned to hit the ground running in this regard. They will be able to represent our members, up to CMAC level or even beyond, depending on the circumstances for the various cases.

**SM:** In your opinion, is the Funding Sufficient SG?

**SSG:** Mr. Editor, Funding for such an important and life long process can never be adequate but the one we have will go a long way in ensuring that this cadre is well established. By the way the funding is to the tune of E87 000.00. Such a Department will need even materials and facilities such as electronic devices, cameras and vehicles so as to perform the tasks as expected.

**SM:** One is interested in finding out how the SNAT Legal Department connects or liaisons with other entities and organisations in strengthening the Programme?

**SSG:** You are posing a million-dollar question Comrade Editor. The Question underscores the need for continuous collaboration with other organisations both inside and outside Swaziland. As a Union, we cannot afford to do things alone. The struggle for workers will only be won through collaborated efforts by all unions. As the SNAT, we have not yet perfectly mapped our strategy in this regard, going ahead. However, we know that there are other Unions such as the National Public Services and Allied Workers Union (NAPSAWU), amongst others which has a fully developed and operational; paralegal cadre. The need to share ideas in this regard can never be overemphasized. We can jointly organise a paralegals conference in an "iron sharpens iron" kind of engagement to share

ideas and experiences. That is necessary.

**SM:** We noted that the Paralegals Programme is now in its infancy stages. What are the challenges you have picked as the SNAT on this Programme?

**SSG:** The trainings have been isolated from each other. The session lacked interconnectedness due to the COVID-19 threat. However, through this funding all those visible spaces in the programme will be closed.

**SM:** Comrade SG, the Membership would like to know what is the core content taught to these Participants and who is preparing this content my Leader?

**SSG:** Our Legal Officer, Mr. Sikelela Zwane, in collaboration with other reputable Law Firms have put the content together. The core of the content is around membership representation in Grievance and Discipline handling as well as representations in Alternative Dispute Resolution for a such as CMAC and the Industrial Court. The SNAT is indeed training labour lawyers and practitioners indeed.

**SM:** We are interested to know what will happen to those who have been trained? Will they be representing teachers in Court or drafting Papers? What exactly will they be doing post this training?

**SSG:** Yes. The trained comrades shall be able to fill dispute forms, record proceedings, represent members, draft court papers, conduct research on cases, conduct grievance and Discipline handling capacity building workshops for the members.

**SM:** We know that the SNAT always have awesome Programmes in initial stages. In your view SG, how does the SNAT envisage to see the Programme sustainable?

**SSG:** The sustainability of this programme shall entirely be the responsibility of the SNAT members themselves. All programmes need funding to be sustainable. Teachers' subscriptions need to be used for this one as well. This means structural budgets in the various tiers of the organisation must include a budget line for this programme. We also hope those trained, will not be selfish and decide to run away with such capacity particularly those who hold certain offices in the SNAT. They must always be available to assist in teachers. They have become an asset for the SNAT.

**SM:** Thank you SG for your time my Leader. We look forward to seeing this Programme succeed.

**SSG:** Thank you so much Comrade Editor. We hope it will be a monumental success indeed.



The SNAT President Mbongwa Dlamini and the DSG Simanga Khumalo during the training of paralegals at the SNAT Centre [Courtesy of the SNAT Media].



# THE **SNAT** SECURES A DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION WITH **SADTU**



**SIKELELA DLAMINI**

SNAT Secretary General [SG]

In its 1 February 2004 article entitled, 'Trade unions and NGOs: the need for cooperation,' Oxfam observes that 'the challenges posed by economic globalisation make it imperative that civil society organisations break down the barriers that have traditionally divided them, in order to ensure that the rights of those who are marginalised or vulnerable are kept firmly on the international agenda. In particular, globalisation brings fresh impetus to the need to forge alliances between the trade union movement and NGOs concerned with social and economic development.'

Thursday, December 09, 2021 marked a new era for the SNAT-SADTU. This historical day formalized a Development Cooperation between the two [2] Unions-borne from a National Resolution of the South African Democratic Union [SADTU] Congress. This life-changing event took place at the Esibayeni Lodge where the SNAT hosted the SADTU KwaZulu Natal [KZN] Provincial Chairperson Comrade Phumlani Duma and Provincial Secretary Comrade Nomarashiya Caluza. The resolution to come to Swaziland was taken in KwaZulu Natal on the 27th of August 2021 where the SNAT had received an invite from the SADTU where the cooperation was discussed, sharing experiences and giving a political perspective of issues of mutual interest between the two [2] Unions. Following the Esibayeni Lodge event, the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) entered into a formal development co-operation with its South African Counterparts: The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU). The SADTU is, by far, the

largest Teacher Union in South Africa and was founded on 06th October 1990. The Membership of the SADTU goes beyond 250 000. The Union is also allied to the African National Congress [ANC] and is an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions [COSATU]. In one of its National General Council meetings, the SADTU resolved to strengthen its pillar on international

bilateral co-operation with the SNAT, a program that was set in motion in August 2021. The SNAT NEC visit to the SADTU on the 27th of August 2021 was a brain-storming session: held between the SNAT-NEC and the SADTU-KZN Provincial Working Committee (PWC). A programme of action was therefore borne out of this kind of engagement.

Commenting on the event, the SNAT SG, Sikelela Dlamini revealed that "Such a partnership could not have come at a better time than this since there is a dire need for the SNAT to establish and solidify international solidarity. The behaviour of the Government of late is clearly anti-union and it is such initiatives that makes it possible for Unions such as ours to fight-off the trade Union Bashing by the employer."

Guided by its principle of broad-base leadership involvement strategy, the SNAT-NEC quickly organized a bilateral engagement between the SNAT General Council [GC] and the SADTU-KZN Provisional leadership. This was successfully held on Thursday (09-12-2021) at the Sibayeni Lodge in Matsapha. This bilateral was organized into two [2] parts, with one organization presenting under each item. These parts were organizational and political situation.



The SNAT NEC with the KZN Provincial Leadership in South Africa on the 28th of August 2021 [Courtesy of SNAT Media].

work. Particular focus was directed to the socio-political issues that played themselves out in neighbouring countries, including Swaziland. Swaziland's neighbouring provinces which are Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) were tasked with strengthening unions in Mozambique and Swaziland. The KZN SADTU province therefore entered into this

The main objectives of the partnership are as follows;

1. To build the capacity of members of the two (2) organizations to be able to better defend their members against all forms of injustices at the work place.
2. To strengthen the operational and navigational systems of the two (2) organisations to make them organisations of choice to all mneducators in their respective countries (South Africa and Swaziland).
3. To bring about and or improve internationalism to the two organisations.
4. To conscientise members of the two organisations on working class philosophy.
5. To deepen the understanding of the members of the two (2) organisations regarding political issues in their immediate environment and to help them to clearly define their role in addressing political questions to enable them to make concrete contributing to such issues. The SNAT SG further observed that "this partnership will enable the SNAT leadership to adequately usher the membership into a political education programme that will assist educators to better understand the current political climate in the country so that they can better participate in national political debates and processes as they join the National Call for the attainment of a Multiparty Constitutional Democracy in this country."

The SADTU-SNAT engagement of the 09-12-2021 made the following Resolutions which will be a guideline for the co-operation.

1. To structure and implement a clear leadership and membership development program, with deliberate provision for capacity building.
2. To exhibit practical understanding of the Union's commitment to the significance of international partnerships.
3. To protect the dignity of the two (2) organisations through various mediums and present its proper image

to various public platforms, whilst advancing professionalism that is borne out of class consciousness.

4. To mobilise resources to ensure broad understanding of the political, economic and organizational context, sustaining the pursuits of the unions and reaching out to all members.

5. To adopt a political programme that deepens the ideology of the SNAT as a Teachers' organization, even as confronted by various political challenges in its pursuit for the creation of a National Democratic Revolution that is also located in the classroom as a site of the struggle.

To conduct a deliberate situational analysis to inform worker demands at the collective bargaining chambers, ensuring free and fair processes through active participation that also has defined modalities for redress.

Commenting on this partnership, the Provincial Secretary of the SADTU KZN, Nomarashiya Caluza, had this to say. "This partnership, grounded on solid foundations of international solidarity, provides the two organisations (SNAT and SADTU) with a platform to share their experiences and good practices on how best each can successfully wage the struggle against the oppressive and exploitative employers. The struggles of workers and the mandate of trade unions is the same, everywhere but the political situation in Swaziland complicates, which is the same situation the SADTU was in pre-1994. The democratic breakthrough and the support the SADTU received from international bodies, strengthened us."

The two Unions agreed that recognizing the significance of international solidarity to assist us define the nature of the class revolution that we have to pursue even through popular collaboration as workers. Conscious of our collective responsibility towards the improvement of the material conditions under a multiparty democratic political dispensation for the benefit of all citizens of Swaziland, as benefactors of

the domestic economy.

At Sibayeni Lodge, we, the members of the SNAT General Council, declared as follows;

To agree on and implement, a class ideology to ensure the transformation of teachers as critical agents of change, translating into the revolutionary duty to ensure the people of Swaziland into responsible citizens, such being through deliberate capacity building and concerted action.

Caluza broadened the essence of the partnership by asserting that: "Both Unions have interests in the protection



SADTU KZN Provincial Secretary [PS]  
Comrade Nomarashiya Caluza  
[Courtesy Pic.]

of human and labour rights as these will facilitate the delivery of quality public education which must be freely accessible to all in our countries. For as long as education is viewed as the best weapon with which to end poverty, unemployment and inequalities, the case for the SNAT and the SADTU existence remains.

Therefore, this partnership must help empower members politically and organisationally but most importantly the partnership must foreground us understanding of trade unionism so that we can locate the role of our unions in the total emancipation of the people in our countries: understanding that our classrooms are sites of struggle with each Union member realising that to teach is an act of a revolution and that must translate in the total empowerment of the people to lead transformation agenda in societies they live in."



# USHERING SCHOOLS TO ONLINE LEARNING


**LUNGELO DLAMINI**

Online Programme Director

**S** **NAT MEDIA [SM] :** Good day Nkhosi. How are you doing?

**Lungelo Dlamini [LD]:** I am excellent, thank you.

**SM:** We appreciate to have you in our Magazine today. Tell us, who is Lungelo Dlamini?

**LD:** Lungelo Dlamini is the second born of five [5] children. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Humanities as well as a Post Graduate Certificate in Education [PGCE]. He is currently one of the leaders of the sz4me Schools Online Programme for Schools, serving as Director.

**SM:** Well, we have been seeing you around Nkhosi, doing awesome work for the education system in the country. Tell us about SZ4ME/Schools Online. What inspired you to come up with this idea Nkhosi? Who are the brains behind such a concept?

**LD:** Sz4me (short for Swazishield4me) Schools Online was inspired by examination reports from Exams Council which always detail the problems learners encountered when answering that year's exam paper. It came about as a solution to guide

learners on examination expectations and ways to deliver in a much more satisfactory way as per question requirements. Most of our learners know answers to questions, but the manner to deliver those answers, is the major problem the programme seeks to address.

**SM:** Hmmm...that's mouthful! Kindly unpack for us what Schools Online is all about? What do you offer for the education system? How do users log in

how to deliver them accordingly as per asked questions. The system also offers all subject lessons, and those lessons have possible exam questions as well as sample answers. Learners open those lessons, and work on them at their own time and pace. It also gives learners past exams, which they write and the system marks and provides feedback, and also lesson revisions, which as well they write and the system marks and provides feedback. Radio

lessons are also documented there on the App. All grades and forms are accommodated on the App. All needed for access is a username and password.

**S** **M** : Powerful stuff! We all know that everything new will always have teething problems. What challenges did you encounter in your first stages of rolling out the Concept? How did you persuade your first school to embrace the

concept? What was the response and attitude of the learners and educators towards the online application?

**LD:** You are correct... The biggest challenge back then was access to gadgets. Quite a number of students didn't have cellphones and those that did, had quite the old type of phone operating system. This was a blessing in disguise, though, as it enabled us to develop an online education system that accommodates today, any type of



to the system? Which Grades are able to access the Application Nkhosi?

**LD:** Schools Online is an examination oriented system that is about helping learners understand clearly what makes their answers correct, and if wrong what actually makes them wrong, and how those wrong answers can be made correct. It's about teaching learners what is expected of them when answering questions, so they know the exact requirements and



Learners showing their Certificates on Academic Challenge No.5 last year [2020].

phone, so long it has access to the internet. The programme took off at Engudzeni FEA High back in 2015, spearheaded by a Principal and teachers who understood the different dynamics of a high pass rate, and they gladly embraced it and embedded it in their teaching and learning process. Since then, it has become the resource base for the process of teaching and learning and examination preparation in a number of high and primary schools across the country.

**SM:** Many online systems will always have technical issues around them such as security and hacking. How do you ensure users aren't vulnerable whilst meandering through your application?

**LD:** Indeed, problems will always be there, but critically so we have an education software that understands that teachers need to teach and learners need to learn, and so must ensure that data is not saved on the phone, for one, in case of technical problems or failures. We have included as well other online mechanisms aimed at total privacy and safety for our users.

**SM:** That's inspiring Nkhosi! You wouldn't do all this on your own. Whom are you working with at Schools Online?

**LD:** Indeed... We have a dedicated team of computer engineers as well as teachers from our schools in the country.

**SM:** Getting online is not a joke for most schools and administrators due to a number of reasons. We would like to know how you were able to market the system to both primary and secondary schools. What was your marketing strategy Nkhosi and how many schools do you have now under your system since 2012?

**LD:** You are correct.... Largely for schools embracing the programme was due to it being online, which many of our

learners enjoy, and that schools who engaged their educators and learners in the programme generally tended to obtain good results. That, more than anything, served to popularise the programme. Also the online exams that are written as preparation for the actual exams drove schools to engage with us even more. And today largely, the fact that we offer automated lessons coupled with easy usability as well calls up a number of our user base. And since 2012, we have proudly served and still serving over 50 primary and high schools.

**SM:** We've seen one innovation which had so much interest from schools: the "Academic Challenge." Tell us about that Nkhosi.

**LD:** Yes, indeed. This year is in its 6th year, called challenge 6. It's an annual examination preparation challenge, where all learners when schools have



Learners showing their Certificates on Academic Challenge No.5 last year [2020].

closed, get into the App to write full paper exams across all subjects as a preparation for their third Term Final Exams. Here, they are trained on various exam skills which are competing learner needs to have. It becomes quite a fun way for them as well, to study during the holidays as upon completion, those that wrote and made it big, are given prizes that include phones, T-shirts and much more in a prize giving ceremony held at an announced school host for that year.

**SM:** In August 2020, the Minister of Education and Training [MoET], Lady Howard-Mabuza, visited Ndzevane High and encouraged learners to utilise the SZ4ME Schools Online App. We would like to know what is the attitude of the MoET on this App? Did you get any technical assistance from them, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic?

**LD:** Yes, she did... The ministry has provided great advice on everything we do. In fact, our regulatory body is the Regional Education Office Inspectorate at Shiselweni. We are constantly given ideas on where to improve and strengthen our academic production for our students. There hasn't been any financial help, which we hope to get one day, but we have tried all we can to keep everything in shape for our teachers and students, though certain Macmillan Education come in as well, but due to the pandemic, everything stood still. But we believe to continue to work with other companies (worthy mention, Derilo Media in Mbabane), so we continue to offer the much needed assistance to educators and learners.

**SM:** Looking at five [5] years from now, where do you see SZ4ME/Schools Online? What is your strategic direction as the Director and where do you see the Company heading to?

**LD:** We see ourselves expanded to each and every primary and high school in Eswatini as well as regionally, because the problems we solve are not uniquely for the country, but other countries as well, particularly in Africa, South of the Sahara.

**SM:** As the SNAT, we appreciate your splendid work Nkhosi and wish you all the best as you move sojourning-up with your invaluable company. We hope more schools shall embrace the App as we move towards Blended Learning.

**LD:** Thank you SM, you are of real help to our learners and educators. We are Sz4me Schools Online and we share quality education online. Thank you so much.

**SM:** Thank you Nkhosi!



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# THE SNAT EAGLE

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## COUNTER REVOLUTION BY GOVERNMENT

### DEAR EDITOR

Since the advent of the pro-democracy protests early this year, the government has launched a full scale offensive, from all angles, against those calling for democratic reforms in the country.

The government continues to try and appease the people of Eswatini by trying to fast track all projects in all communities that were stalled for years because of corruption in Mswati's government. This is good for the people of this great nation. We have noticed various Ministers of Mswati's government running helter-skelter around the country trying to quench the raging fire for democratic reforms. From the availing of electricity schemes where in certain communities we are told people were made to pay as little as E20 to have electricity connected in their homes. The announcement of the RDF by the ministry of tinkhundla to the tune of E3 Million availed for business loans to the youth in Dvokodweni Inkhundla, and many other activities that we have seen happen in recent days. One can say that this is a little too late, the horse has been let loose the cart: there is no turning back.

The people cannot be pacified with services that are rightfully theirs. This posture from government should be a clear indication that she takes Swazi people for fools. She thinks she can just throw sum crumbs to the people and

hope that it will take their focus from what they desire.

Consideration of the history of the past four [4] months is what will count most in the addressing of the current political situation in Swaziland. History has taught us from time immemorial though that meaningful freedom hardly comes from an oval table. My thought.

Avid Supporter of Democracy

**Sandile Mndvoti**

## THE DOWNSIDE OF DEMOCRACY

### DEAR EDITOR

Democracy is a beautiful concept which most of us believe in and aspire to live by simply because it respects people's opinions, views, beliefs and rules by the will of the majority. Democracy respects human dignity and advance and protects human will. It is for these reasons that we love democracy so much and yearn to live in a democratic society wherein we are all equal in the eyes of the law and state.

This striking concept came with a process of mandate renewal called elections, whereby leaders are elected in a free and fair process. This was a fine-looking innovation, however, because of human ambition and sometimes just pure greed, this

process is turned into the ugliest, sometimes bloodiest battle of all time. The SNAT is usually no exception to this ugliness. We are fresh from the Burial and Co-op Elections which went on smoothly on the surface. But below the surface, slender, backbiting and sheer gossip ruled them all.

The national elections for our dear union are soon approaching and already interests have been declared. Lo and behold, the dirt diggers are already at work. This beautiful process has been turned ugly. Instead of serving a great purpose, it lives behind permanent enemies, bitterness and new allies and friend. They say in politics there are no permanent friends or foes. This has proven true, many a times. People are always brought together by a programme and also are divided by it.

My dear comrades, as we begin the process of mandate renewal may we remember this. The people you'll be sharing vile stuff about someone else will tomorrow be on the other side of the table telling on you. The person you are spreading vile stuff about will be your ally tomorrow. Where then are you going to get the thinners to remove the paint that you'd be painting this person with during these elections? Elections come and go, there's no need to destroy each other. After all, 'ungumuntfu ngebantfu!' It is my humble plea, dear SNAT comrades, to keep it clean, free and fair.

Let the SNAT win!!

Aluta Continua!

**Palesa!**



# THE SNAT EAGLE

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## NOT YET UHURU! MENTAL EMANCIPATION IS CORE

### DEAR EDITOR

**T**he first liberation human kind needs is the liberation of the mind against a dense addiction of material things and the thirst to be deemed clever. I am taken years back when I was doing my Grade 5. The English Language book featured a story yet the original author, not known to me, but wrote a masterpiece that will remain relevant for years as long as people are not emancipated from the addiction of being popular and to be perceived clever.

Let me retell the gist of the story. In a land ruled by an extravagant emperor who was known for his lavish lifestyle and expensive taste in clothing, was visited by a known tailor. They wanted to showcase their new fabric to the King. The King invited his trustees to give their opinion on the things that were showcased. The auditorium was full of excitement as everyone was marvelling the collection of beautiful fabric that was showcased to make the King's New collection of suits.

The popular tailors mentioned that only clever people will see the flamboyance of their new collection of fabric. The hall was abuzz as the royal trustees were admiring the collection and everyone including his Cabinet Ministers', showing their brilliance as they all appear to see the fabric as it was only visible to clever people and not visible to the dull and in a house full of people

who would want to appear too clever. No one said s/he can't see, including the emperor.

Measurements were taken for the Emperor and without much anticipating the fitting day came and again the trustees were cordially invited as there was going to be a banquet to celebrate the New exclusive collection from a renown celebrated tailor. The Emperor came in different suits and much to the approval of the Emperor's right hand people and the confidence of the Emperor boosted.

A trustee of the household ushered in a noble royal waitress, embarking on her daily quest of serving the royal dignitaries with the royal delicacies. To her dismay which she failed to contain, she was shocked as to why were they clapping and celebrating their emperor modelling naked. She solved a huge royal scam that served the Kings dignity and fortune from a conman believed to be a highly reputable tailor.

Now shifting our focus from the above story back to our world of reality whereby those entrusted to be advices to the people in authority are so much drunk with obsession for leadership, ignoring facts yet so controlled by 'kuba tidli.' They end up compromising their values as Christians. As the elite, we expect them to bring sanity and like the North Pole, lead the country to greater heights. Sadly, they are the ones clapping hands while the titanic they are inside is heading towards an

iceberg.

Being too ambitious is dangerous. If you are willing to kill towards your way to the top of a political seat, you will be shocked that by the time you finish killing people, you'll be left with no one to lead. Secondly, leading with hate of being criticised will never yield a great leader but a graveyard to show because everyone who possess a different opinion is deemed an enemy and better be killed.

The moment we quickly realise that we are not computer programmed for us to think and do things the same, the better because that is when we can appreciate and embrace diversity, appreciate our differences it's when we will achieve social tolerance. Our society is rotten to the core because we lack values and principles that will allow us to differentiate right from wrong: good from bad.

Today we find highly educated, Christians defensive of a system that is pagan because it is paying their bills. That man of the cloth can call a hit on you because you a disturbing him as he feasts at the expense of the poor. Let's emancipate the mind first for change is good and it is coming yet let's be careful not to create a monster of an angry generation. Let me drop pen before you slumber.

**Sabelo Simelane**



# A WORD FROM MLIBA BRANCH OF THE SNAT



**BHEKI DLAMINI**

Mliba Branch Secretary

**C**ompliments of the Season to the fraternity of formal educators in the Information, Education and Knowledge industry.

Not in deviation with issues directly affecting our members, I find it appropriate to offer national condolences to all families who have lost their loved ones: some maimed by the barrel of the gun, some shoved into political exile, some reduced to permanent disability. Pupils and students, deprived an education by being arrested for registering their concerns of demanding democracy, justice and other civil liberties from His Majesty King Mswati III's government which has an octopus-like grip, suffocating all social, economic and political institutions and investments meant to benefit the masses for his own selfish ends. Before I delve more on these national calamities placing our country into a brink of being plunged into an abyss of political strife, I urge all patriotic Swazis and Teachers in particular to soldier on in finding amicable solutions to the current civil unrest, which led the status quo to massacre unarmed civilians.

## **The Geographical Location of our Branch, overview of Schools (Primary and High)**

Coupled with other issues, and getting down to business of the Swaziland National Association of Teachers

[SNAT], Mliba Branch, let's give you a glimpse of the spatial location and dispersion of the member schools' giving rise to the delimitation of Mliba Branch of the SNAT. Mliba Branch of the SNAT extends over 3 Regions, which are Manzini, Hhohho and Lubombo. The Branch is situated at more than 87 KM away from the Capital of Swaziland [Mbabane]. In Manzini, one can access it through MR 5 road leading to Madlangempisi and Matsamo border gate. From Lubombo through MR3 via KMill-Hlane road and towards Northern Hhohho through D 10 Malandzela Road across Black Mbuluzi River leading to Maphalaleni electoral district.

Mliba Branch sits on Five [5] constituencies delimit by the Elections and Boundaries Commission for electoral processes which are Mkhweni, Kukhanyeni, Maphalaleni, Madlangempisi and Hlane. Member of schools include but are not limited to, La-Mawandla High, Mcozini High, Sidvokodvo Nazarene Primary and High, Saint Florence Primary and High,

Kukhanyeni Primary and High, Nkiliji Primary and High, Antioch Primary, Malamlela Primary, Black Mbuluzi Methodist, Mliba Nazarene Primary, Black Mbuluzi Nazarene, Lutfofja Methodist Primary, Ekutsimuleni Lutheran Primary, Dvokolwako Primary and High, Khuphuka Primary and High, Bhekinkhosi Nazarene Primary, Mhlahlo High, Lubhaceni Primary, Nsingweni High, Sigombeni Nazarene to mention a few. For the purposes of limitations of this article, however to be precise we have 12 High Schools and 22 Primary schools.

All schools are at least double streamed or even more and co-educational. Most schools are missionary schools as opposed to community schools. We have both males and females being school administrators [Head or Deputy Head Teachers], yet there are many female teachers as opposed to their male counterparts. The same goes for pupils, the female population commands a majority.



Farewell Function for retired educators

The effects of COVID-19 to your Branch's Plan of Action and Strategic Roadmap

The global pandemic COV-SARS-2 of 2019, slammed all sectors with unprecedented challenges while the globe lost millions of lives in the shortest possible period in history. It goes without saying that the devastating effects of COVID 19- wrecked-havoc at Mliba branch of SNAT where we lost some of the teaching personnel. The estimated number of teachers infected by COVID 19 stood at 30, yet 8 passed on this is inclusive of figures from 1st to 3rd as per the segregation of the pandemic by epidemiologists. An unrecorded number of teachers were affected as their



**Mliba Branch Executive Members after checking an ill comrade**

friends, siblings, relatives died helplessly at the hands of an already collapsing national public health system. It goes without saying that the mutation and the recently discovered South African strain is likely to warrant the closure of schools in not so distant future as per the dictates of the National Disaster Management Act of 2007 as amended. The lock down restrictions rendered it impossible for other teachers to visit sick teachers for moral support, and to supply them with nutritional necessities. Funerals were restricted to family members and facilitated by the government which contributed to mental stress and anxiety to our surviving members as they could not bury their colleagues. It felt like one was on his own in a desert. At the height of the COVID 19 waves prices were swollen in retail and wholesale outlets making it difficult to subsist. On educational issues a lot is left to be desired as we have seen the rescheduling of national school calendar making the year end of 2021 overlap to 2022. This seemingly places the calendar year of schools by a year behind which is an indication Swaziland is failing to cope. The mass promotions of pupils, to the following class without learning is detriment to the

quality of education that is desirable by educational standards, this has compromised the already compromised quality standards of education in Swaziland. It is worthy to note that the shift education system has negative effects on the quality of education since it breeds educator participation fatigue. There are exceedingly more pupils in classes than the required standard and that, raced against time and quality, breeds' poor quality for a measure of service.

On one hand, some teachers, using their own resources, tried to reach to their pupils using social media platforms and it proved not efficient. This is because most pupils could not afford to buy data at exorbitant prices from service providers as they stay in rural poor families where the last meal is a matter of life and death. This has led some pupil who survived through the schools as centers of care and support feeding schemes to be without a meal.

#### Branch Challenges

There is a plethora of challenges faced by the Branch ranging from education to extra educational challenges. There are problems of accessibility by other schools in activities of the Branch because of natural elements like weather, poor road network and communication infrastructure. Some members have to cross low level bridges and during summer it becomes impossible since rivers and streams are usually full. We can't even visit the schools physically yet is imperative to do so. It was once postulated that the composition in terms of school members be restructured and review boundaries to allow members to attend where they are at proximity and there is accessibility.

Furthermore, the challenge of lack of technological infrastructure to promote virtual learning proves to be a mammoth task as it is evident that technological usage programmes should be installed and accessible at any time at schools to breach the gap of learning during lockdowns. We need to lobby the government to switch live the EPTC New Generation Network for the purposes of learning both at home and school as it is affordable despite the controversy of the joint venture agreement which does not benefit emaSwati.

A budget needs to be set aside for home-based care for those teachers who might contract the new variant [Omicron] strain of South Africa since it is deadly.

The possibility that the public health system collapses in the midst of care is high so we need to have an extra budget.

The last challenge is the issue of pupils, getting involved in the unrest. The Child Protection and Welfare Act 2012 and other UN conventions states it clear that children, which includes our pupils, should not be used as a vehicle to attain political agendas. However, in our case, we have a National Government which fails to resonate with circumstances. It deploys security personnel to schools which, in all possible ways, that has a mental and psychological effect with regards to educational psychology. As to how this national issue is to be sorted its food for thought for every teacher, parent and responsible statespersons. It seems Graffiti on school walls won't, stop, the burning of schools, the threats teachers get for doing the jobs from leftist group further complicates the learning environment.

The strategic roadmap of the Branch towards 2022

Our key strategic programmes include:

1. Completing the Mliba Branch of the SNAT Centre at Luve. This can be easily facilitated by an increased subvention or request for a special fund to complete the structure as it will remain the property of the SNAT for ages.
2. We will propose the re-drawing and delimitation of boundaries tailor-made to solve our accessibility of SNAT activities and related matters.
3. We will also lobby the central office for an increased subvention.
4. We will also stand in solidarity with the National Leadership in demanding improved salaries, permanent employment of temporary educators and other bread and butter issues.



**Mliba Branch Structure as of 2021**



# MADLANGEMPISI BRANCH AT A GLANCE



**GUGU MANTIMAKHULU**

Madlangempisi Branch Secretary

**T**he Madlangempisi Branch of SNAT is one of the three [3] Branches of SNAT making up the Hhohho region. The Branch shares boundaries with three [3] SNAT Branches namely; Piggs Peak, Mliba and Mhlume. The Branch is made of twenty-nine [29] schools of which sixteen [16] are primary schools and thirteen high schools. It has a membership of 432 members as of July 2020. Though the Branch is relatively small in size, the schools are widely stretched apart from each other and some of them are located in remote areas that teachers could only use a for hire from the main road, taking Phemba Primary Schools for example.

As it is the case with most SNAT Branches and the country at large, the Madlangempisi Branch of SNAT was not spared from the clutches of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Virus claimed two [2] lives of our comrades, may their souls rest in power. We also

had fifteen [15] survivors of COVID-19. Not only did the virus hit the Branch on human lives, the virus also had great impact on the branch Plan of Action and strategic roadmap. The Branch had plans of having schools visits, scheduled meetings with management committees, workshops for SNAT Reps and a Branch mass meeting for the year 2020. All these could not be achieved due to the lock down and strict COVID-19 regulations which not only prohibited meetings but also restricted numbers in gatherings when the lock down was relaxed.

Due to COVID-19, most heads of school denied the Branch Executive Committee entry in school premises citing COVID-19 risk in the lives of the pupils and the staff. As a result,

the Branch Executive Committee encountered difficulties in assessing the sharing of information from National Office to ordinary members in the staff room through the SNAT Reps. It was even worse for schools where the SNAT Reps are not in the branch WhatsApp page. The gap is so wide it shall take a lot for the Branch to fix.

The Branch is greatly challenged by the members' loss of interest in Union matters. As a result, Branch meetings are poorly attended. In the Schools, there are SNAT Reps who have served more than the stipulated period because members do not want to take up the position of the SNAT Rep. This is not only the case in schools as even the Branch committees are still not fully occupied. Though the Branch held bi-



Madlangempisi SNAT Reps during a workshop for Credentials  
[Courtesy Pic.]



Members of the Mandlangempisi Branch of SNAT in a social activity [Courtesy Pic.]

elections to fill up the vacancies, some committees still have only one member.

There are also cases of comrades who had joined the union but still their stop orders are not effected despite having gone through the registration process, countless times. This does not only stall the Branch strength but turns off the member's interest in the Union.

In trying to mitigate the challenges the Branch is not sitting idle, but trying strategies such as using sports to bring back the members. We also brace our hope in the workshops being rolled out by the SNAT with the help of OAJ and continued school visit to fight against union apathy. Going toward 2022 the Branch has prioritized obtaining a confirmation letter from the Ekukhulumeni Royal Kraal in regard of the piece of land belonging to the Branch, clearing the

land and fencing. We are greatly humbled that the first two has already been achieved. The Branch is currently trying to achieve the fencing part. It has always been the Branch's main objective to develop the area as it was obtained way back in 2006 and it is gradually decreasing in size as it remains unmarked.

The Branch also anticipated increasing the Union membership by encouraging members to join the union. This will be achieved through the school visits projected in the branch almanac. As we execute the school visits, we hope to gain more teachers to join the Union and to win back the members have lost interest in the Union.



The Branch Chairperson Samson Nxumalo addressing membership during a Branch Meeting in 2019 [Courtesy Pic.].



# MBULUNGWANE BRANCH DURING COVID-19 ERA



**COMRADE SAVERIOUS NSIBANDE**

Mbulungwane Secretary

**M**bulungwane Branch of SNAT stretches from the Nhletjeni Mountains, East of Hlathikhulu, and stretches past Jericho and Patmos, taking on its way the likes of Nkhungwini, Ngozi, and Ngololweni. On its way up the Mbulungwane mountain, it rakes in Sandleni, Jerusalem, Hhohho and Dzakasini before checking in at Tjendlovu and Velebantfu alongside Ntabeni and Holy Family past Mooihoek. We wouldn't have finished locating Mbulungwane Branch without mentioning Phongolwane, Mzila, Ngudzeni, down Ntjanini and Nyatsini.

The Branch is not complete without descending the great Sigwe Mountain, taking with you Mphelandzaba before proceeding to Lulakeni towards Ndunaythini, Mahlabatsini, Decapol and Mbava. In total, the Branch boasts of 41 schools. Of this number, 16 are high schools and the rest are primary schools with one Adult Education Centre.

Mbulungwane Branch is known for its ever presence in all SNAT activities though it is a branch that is extremely rural and is so inaccessible by road. The resilience and strength of the members of this Branch have

earned the Branch its nickname of iBranch Lenemandla. The Branch is not as big; its membership is slightly above 600. Worth noting is that the Branch has not been spared in as far as the effects of Covid-19 are concerned. It is important to thank the Lord Almighty that the Branch was not as hard hit as some other Branches in as far as the Covid-19 deaths are concerned. Since the advent of Covid-19, the Branch has recorded less than five Covid-19 deaths as of November 2021. However, as expected, we did record numerous Covid-19 infections that were not as rampant both amongst teachers and learners. The abrupt closing and opening of school didn't make things easy for the Branch in as far as our Programme of Action [PoA] is concerned.

Our Plan of Action [PoA] was brought to a halt by the situation caused by the rampant Covid-19. Most activities that we had scheduled had to be cancelled. The Branch had to operate digitally which proved difficult since some of its members in leadership are not as techno savvy.

Only activities that could be done by BEC proved possible. Mass activities were greatly affected. However, it's worth mentioning that BEC didn't just sit still and yield to the Covid-19 situation. Instead, the BEC used such an opportunity moving from school to school doing Vuselas and sorting out disputes that needed our intervention as BEC.

Though it has been a good year for the Branch, but it's worth mentioning that we have had numerous challenges. The biggest challenge was our failure to implement our Programme of Action [PoA]. Before the Covid-19 era, the Branch invested in developing a strategic roadmap or plan. We were so hopeful that such a plan will help us fulfill our vision and carry out the mandate given to us by members. We didn't know that we would spend a third of our term dealing with Covid-19 effects. Our programme of action would have helped the Branch develop capacity and be transformed in as far as union matters are concerned. We hope and believe that the coming year will be better.



The Branch Management Committee [BMC] with the SNAT Burial Committee [Courtesy Pic.]

# THE PERSPECTIVE OF SITEKI TOP BRANCH



**LOT VILAKATI**

Siteki Top Branch Secretary

The Siteki Top Branch is one of the three [3] Branches that make up the Lubombo Region. We are sandwiched by Big Bend Branch of the SNAT in the South and Mozambique border line in the East and Mhlume Branch of the SNAT in the North. On the West side, we are sharing the border with our sister Branch-Manzini Region. The Branch comprises of Four [4] zones. Two [2] are found in the Lubombo Plateau that is the Maphungwane Zone and Siteki Zone and the other two [2] zones are found in the hottest part of the country in the Lowveld that is the Mpolonjeni Zone and the Mpaka zone.

The Siteki Top Branch's Executive Committee [BEC] is one of the Gender-balanced Executive with Four [4] females and three [3] males in the Branch Leadership. The Chairman is

Cde Memory Vilakati, a headteacher at St. Boniface Primary, Deputy Chairperson is Cde Thembisile Mthembu, a teacher at Malindza Central Primary School, Secretary is Cde Lot Jesus Gaddaffi Vilakati, a teacher from Lasi High School, Deputy Secretary is Mandla Sifundza, a teacher from Malindza Central Primary, Treasurer is Cde Nomcebo Silomo Mngomezulu, a teacher at St. Boniface Primary School, Recording Secretary is Abner Mbulie, a teacher at Malindza Community Primary School and the Gender and Human Rights officer is Cde Katsoe Zewula, a teacher from Manyeveni Nazarene Primary School. We only have four [4] deployees at the National Office Bearers. That is Cde Sindi Lensha Ncongwane, Burial Treasurer, Cde Welcome Ngwenya, Deputy Chair Co-op Board, Cde Sitile

14 Schools, that is eleven [11] primaries and three [3] high schools. Siteki Zone is having fourteen [14] Schools, that is nine [9] primaries, four [4] high schools and one [1] College. Mpolonjeni zone contains seventeen [17] schools, that is eleven [11] primaries and six [6] high schools. Last but not least is the Mpaka zone with twenty [20] schools, fourteen [14] primaries, five [5] high schools and one [1] college.

Then the total number of schools is sixty-five [65] schools, forty-five [45] primaries, eighteen [18] high schools and two [2] colleges.

Most of our members were highly affected by the virus [COVID-19]. Some reported but others preferred to stay anonymous which is also allowed. We had about two hundred and ten [210] reported cases of COVID-19 and out of those we had only one [1] death, thus

far. The arrival of the virus affected most of our planned activities in the past year. Due to the Regulations of lock down and failure to meet in groups, it is not only the social part of the Branch activities that were highly affected, even the Branch Education

programmes which are at the heart of the organization. Members must be well capacitated first in order to understand their Rights as members and once they attain that, a crop of new well-informed Leaders will emerge from



Farewell Function for retired educators

Dube Lubombo Resolution Rep and Cde Gabsile Shongwe Treasurer NASOWCO.

## SCHOOLS IN THE BRANCH

The Branch comprises of 65 schools in total, the Maphungwane zone is having





Siteki Top Branch Management Committee [BMC] and SNAT Reps visiting the Branch Plot recently.

those programmes, members will be able to hold their leaders accountable and the Leaders will be obliged to account to the well informed membership. Moreover, a capacitated membership will hold its employer [government] accountable. The members will also understand the role of the Union in their lives and also their obligations when it comes to union duties. As a Branch, we request a clear education programme from the National Deputy Secretary General that will be rolled out in all fifteen [15] Branches of the SNAT to capacitate the Union membership. An education that will be standard to all. When we talk of membership based education we mean at least or +90% of the membership must be able to get these lessons. How do we achieve that? BECs, together with the Office of DSG, held by its education officers from top down, must engage on a door to door strategy of education that is zonal workshop and also study circles. In the availability of

the Social Media, the SNAT FM of Cde Mcolisi 'Mrototo' Motsa, can also help reach wider membership. The Branch games, Regional prayers and games should not be spared too. Union bashing is the main challenge we are faced with. The Branch decided to buy a vehicle that will be used to visit those affected schools as soon as possible, also do random Vusela exercise in those known EPA-led schools that are frowning over the SNAT. Union Apathy, is pleasantly addressed by the ongoing OAJ workshops and the message is clear to our members. On the unavailability of Offices and Conference Centre, the Branch decided to buy a plot under Siteki Municipality, to build its offices there and Conference Centre for the Branch. The strategic roadmap began with a Branch Day on the 4th of December that was held at Mpaka High School, where teachers pat themselves at the back for pulling through the recently passed terrible year and all those who

attended were pampered with a free cap branded Siteki Top Branch Day 2021. On the 16th December 2021, we had a Regional OAJ workshop hosted by the Lubombo Regional Executive Committee [REC] at Siteki Hotel. On the 18th of January 2022, the Branch will have a workshop on Electoral Processes where the National Constitution and Bylaws committee will facilitate. The Branch will also fence the plot and level it and erect a toilet on the site. We will also have a Branch Conference. We will also attend a Regional Conference. May 01, 2022, the Branch will attend Workers' Day organized by the TUCOSWA. October 2022, the Branch will attend National Conference at Sibayeni Lodge organized by the National Executive of the SNAT. On the 5th October 2022, the Branch will attend the National Teachers' Day organized by the SNAT NEC. We'll then host a Branch Day in December 2022.



Members of the Lubombo Region listening attentively during the SNAT-OAJ Workshop.



The Branch RS ensuring that stomach issues are taken care of during the Branch Day at Mpaka High School on the 4th of December 2021.

# ESWATINI SOLIDARITY FUND RESPONDING TO THE JUNE 2021 MASSACRE BY THE ESWATINI GOVERNMENT

**T**he SNAT Media took time to engage eSwatini Solidarity Fund on the admirable work they have done for Swazis since the June-July 2021 massacre by the Government of Swaziland. The fund is a volunteer-based international movement of all sympathisers of the democratic movement in eSwatini that collects all forms of financial, material and otherwise support to help with humanitarian and relief efforts brought by the political turmoil in eSwatini.

**S** **NAT Media[SM] :**  
Good day to you Comrade!

**Eswatini Solidarity [ES] :**  
Good day Comrade. Thank you for the platform.

**SM:** We've been seeing you around for a while. Tell us what informed the formation of eSwatini Solidarity? Who are the Brains Behind such a noble cause?

**ES:** The formation of the fund was brought about by the tragic events of late June and early July 2021. As the reports of people perishing at the hands of the armed forces began to mount, it had become all too clear that we were bearing witness to a civilian massacre. There was also the fear that the country was on the cusp of a humanitarian crisis the likes of which we had never seen before. Knowing very well that this was unprecedented, it was our estimation that the existing humanitarian networks would be stretched to the limit and were likely to be unprepared for a situation like this. Consequently, we decided to

offer our energies towards lending a hand to those compatriots who have been most severely affected.

The solidarity fund was initiated by a group of Swazi activists mainly in the South African and Scandinavian diaspora, however it immediately grew to include activists within the country and other parts of the globe.

those who needed it. We saw the solidarity fund as a mechanism to transform the goodwill of people into tangible assistance to victims and survivors of the massacre. Naturally, our top priority was to try and provide assistance to those injured by the armed forces.

**SM:** Hmmm...we saw the next day [July 2, 2021] posting that you require volunteers. What keeps the organisation going? Who are the funders and what is the Resource Mobilisation Strategy?

**ES:** In hindsight, the call for volunteers was made pre-emptively without a detailed plan on how we would utilise their energies. However, it turned out to be a very useful call, as it drew many excellent people into our network, and opened numerous collaborative possibilities for those doing similar work. We haven't yet

had the opportunity to reflect on what keeps the organisation going, but it is likely a combination of factors. However, I think the main one would most probably be that the organisation is born of volunteers and activists with no agenda



The Eswatini Solidarity Team after assisting a victim of the June massacre (Courtesy Pic.)

**SM:** I remember July 01, 2021, you posted on your Twitter account that the eSwatini Solidarity Fund has been established. What were the particular objectives of the Fund?

**ES:** At that point, the primary objective was to get aid as quickly as possible to





The Eswatini Solidarity fund team (Courtesy Pic)

other than to better the condition of their country.

**SM:** In every case, there are FAQ when such entities are established. Tell us about issues of transparency and accountability of the Funds you receive.

**ES:** Indeed, comrade, transparency and accountability are key ideals that we are striving to achieve, and once achieved, to maintain. The organisation was deliberately called the fund so that it would be clear to all that we would be collecting financial resources. Further, we are especially conscious of the fact that poor financial management is the main cause of organisational decay in our day and age.

Our special quarterly report published on 3rd October details the expenditure of monies donated to the fund for the period July-October 2021. We have also committed to compiling an annual report at the end of the 1st 12 months of our existence.

**SM:** Since the massacre by the State in June and July, we have seen you assisting a number of victims of the brutality of the regime. We would further like to know how many civilians have you assisted as the Solidarity Fund? What kind of assistance have you been providing? In your view, is it sufficient?

**ES:** When we released our special quarterly report at the end of October

was in the form of a once off cash donation and basic needs food package and the total value of the aid for each case was set to E3500. Since then we have continued our support to those needing aid and we shall publish this information in our Annual Report which falls on the same day as the start of the massacre, June 29, 2022.

However, more than material aid we set out to do something else. A key issue of concern was that the way in which these atrocities were being reported at the time did not do much to humanise and expose the real experiences of the victims and the survivors. Using the power of social media platforms, we set out to broadcast in small bites, a brief summary of each survivor of the massacre.

**SM:** Your delivery model is awesome comrades! As the SNAT Media, we sincerely appreciate. How do you handle the emotions that arise when visiting the victims of the brutality of the state?

**ES:** This aspect is unfortunately the sole burden of our ground team. Administrative functionaries such as myself are insulated by being outside of the country. However, the words of our ground team lead Cde Gugu Makhanya may be of assistance: "I'm not sure we are able to handle the emotions. We often cry one too many times especially when the victims break down. It's quite emotionally draining so it does get to

2021, the count of those we had assisted exceeded 32 families. Up till that point, we had focused primarily on those who had sustained serious injuries at the hands of the armed forces. The type of assistance

us. But we're grateful for the psychosocial support we receive from Phumela Project so we debrief now and then."

**SM:** We further saw you comrades assembling The Unthinkable. Tell us more about that. How did you come to meet the Producer: Comfort Ndzinisa?

**ES:** Firstly, the documentary was an initiative conceived by Comfort Ndzinisa himself. However, it was fortunate for the project that Comfort is a childhood friend of one of our founding members, Manqoba Nxumalo, and given that the solidarity fund ground team was traversing the country conducting outreach visits, it was easy for us to then pair our efforts with Comfort's work on the documentary. Of course this initiative was also supported by a small but significant number of Swazis inside the country and in the diaspora.

**SM:** Of course the Documentary has received massive support from different spectrum. What is your marketing strategy and how do you feel about the reception the documentary has received so far?

**ES:** We are humbled by the way the documentary has been received. It is also a testament to the sacrifices our people have made by going to the streets and putting themselves in the frontline against this brutal Tinkhundla regime.

We actually haven't developed a specific marketing strategy for the documentary itself, how we will take your question as a directive to do some active marketing. But in general, we have relied on fraternal institutions and allies of the democratic movement in Swaziland to air the documentary.

Also the documentary is available on YouTube and Facebook. If you search the phrase "The Unthinkable eSwatini Solidarity Fund" you find it online.

**SM:** We've also seen breath-taking merchandise from yourselves. Is it part of your resource mobilisation strategy as the fund?

**ES:** Well, thank you for the compliment on the merchandise comrade. I'm sure comrade Vamile Matsebula who is behind the design and leading our fundraising portfolio will be encouraged by it.

We live in an age where competition for people's attention is higher than ever. Of course, the most convenient resource mobilization strategy is cash donations to the fund's account.

However, cash transactions do not necessarily result in advocacy. Therefore, a key strategy we have



implemented is to go on a strong public relations campaign to keep the name and the objectives of the fund in the minds of the audience.

Therefore, we want to thank the people who purchase and wear the merchandise and we want to encourage them to continue with their much needed support and advocacy. The same gratitude goes for those who retweet, share and like our content on social media.

**SM:** Your work is sterling. The other day we saw you comrades hosting a counselling session for the victims of the massacre by the State. How do you manage such massive initiatives considering that there is no sufficient resources for the Fund?

**ES:** The group counselling event was an intervention which came about due to the severity of the stories coming from the ground. Also, by being on the ground early, mental health organisations such as the PhumelelaProject made contact with

us to collaborate on a few visits to the victims and survivors.

The fund then suggested that it would be useful to have a group counselling event which would serve a group of survivors willing to share their experiences.

A surprising lesson we learned by conducting the group counselling event is that many people were willing to contribute valuable non-monetary ways. For instance, overnight accommodation at the venue was made available to the Solidarity Fund by the owner at no cost, also volunteers with vehicles offered to transport some of the victims at no cost or reduced cost. All these small but significant contributions made the difference for us.

**SM:** On the 5th of November 2021, you were at the Forge in Braamfontein where there was a screening of The Unthinkable. Tell us about that experience.

**ES:** We have had requests to air the documentary by numerous organisations and festivals since its release. The event hosted by The Forge in Braamfontein was one amongst numerous theatre screenings held globally. The documentary has now been screened in theatres in South Africa, Norway, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, United States of America and Taiwan.

However, the Forge screening was different in that the Director and the Solidarity Fund were able to be present



in person for a Q & A after the screening.

Having watched the documentary a few times doesn't take away the emotional



toll the subject matter takes on the viewer, and the screening at the Forge was no different.

The engagement with the audience was very encouraging and we found that the documentary motivated those from outside the country to consider ways of offering solidarity with the people of Swaziland.

**SM:** We read a tweet that you are looking for a volunteer to be a book keeper. Where do you see the Fund in three [3] years from now in terms of strategy and diversification?

**ES:** We committed ourselves to establishing the Fund as an effective institution. So in three [3] years we hope to have a strong volunteer base with an organised and functional structure, with a clear set of ideals and objectives. As the number of transactions the fund conducts has increased, we have realised that we need to implement a bookkeeping and accounting system tailored for the type of work we are involved in.

We have received very interesting proposals and CV's from many interesting and qualified citizens. We would like to take this opportunity to send our sincerest thanks to them.

**SM:** As the SNAT Media, we appreciate your awesome philanthropic work comrades. We wish you the best in your future endeavours.

**ES:** Many thanks Comrades, we appreciate your interest in the solidarity fund.



# THE ROAD TO THE SNAT ELECTIVE CONFERENCE GETS UNDER WAY



**COMRADE JUSTICE DLAMINI**

Credentials Secretary

In preparation for the SNAT elective conference coming in 2022, the Organization has embarked on a programme of membership empowerment exercise on matters relating to elections. Headed by the National Credentials Committee, the SNAT has rolled out a programme on Voter education aimed at empowering all members across the Fifteen [15] Branches of the Organization. The main targets of this exercise are the Shopstewards (SNAT Reps) who are positioned by the SNAT Constitution at the Centre of the elective processes. The SNAT Reps possess the most potent power in the execution of representative democracy in the Union. However, with this power comes a civic responsibility to consider and make when electing representatives into Office at various levels of the Organizational strata. That's why capacitating of the SNAT Reps has been viewed to be of paramount importance. To this far (day of publication) 8/15 branches have been visited on this mandate namely: Big Bend, Gege, Hlathikhulu, Mankayane,

Manzini, Mbabane, Mbulungwane and Madlangempisi. The Voter Education has been received with great enthusiasm, judging from the attendance and Participation by the members. There are four [4] thematic areas addressed through the voter education exercise by the Four [4] members of the Committee with the exclusion of the Organizing Secretary [OS]. These thematic areas are presented each after the other by the members of the National Credentials Committee and then a platform for questions and answers and discussions by the plenary is opened. The Thematic areas are:

- a) General Knowledge on elections in Democratic Organizations
- b) The SNAT Elections Procedure
- c) The Accreditation Procedure
- d) Co-option and bi-elections procedure in the SNAT

## **A) General knowledge on democratic elections**

The main focus of this thematic area is to highlight the significance of nominating and or standing for nomination as a basic right for every member of the Organization. The objective is to clear the misconception that elections or Voting is simple making a cross (x) and to inculcate a culture of taking serious the process of elections. Electing someone or standing for elections should trigger serious and deep thoughts processes of the mind aimed at propelling the Organization to new heights.

There are fundamental questions that one would have to consider before making a choice on whom to nominate or whether to stand or not stand for elections. These include knowing:

- a. What are the objectives and general principles of the Organization (SNAT)?
- b. What are the duties of each Office?



Credentials Secretary Comrade Justice Dlamini unpacking issues at Mhlosheni Branch [Courtesy Pic.]



Credentials Chairperson Comrade Phindela Nxumalo clarifying constitutional matters at Mliba Branch [Courtesy Pic.]

### **B) The SNAT elections procedure, Accreditation, co option and by elections Procedure**

Part of the work of the Credentials Committee is to facilitate and oversee the elections processes in the SNAT. Therefore, the Committee has seen it worthwhile to conscientise members on this area to make the nomination exercise smooth sailing and efficient. The Credentials Committee also has the responsibility to accredit those who are nominated to stand for SNAT elections and those that attend to the SNAT conferences. The procedure on election, co-option and accreditation are enshrined in the SNAT constitution of 2012 and further expounded in the National Credentials Committee by Laws.

### **Pertinent Questions and Answers**

Here are some of the questions that

have come out from the voter education exercise from the branches that have been visited so far

1. Q. When is campaigning expected to begin and end?

A. Campaigning is supposed to begin after the release of candidature list and to end after the Electoral Officer has given each one of the contestants a chance to campaign before the delegates at elective conference.

2 Q. Is it allowed to have members of the campaign teams to move along the queue on day and time of elections with pieces of paper or pictures to influence the voters

A. Strictly not allowed. Such habit is prohibited by article 23.6.1 of the SNAT constitution.

3. Q. Are slate politics permitted in democratic unions?

A. No statute prohibits such as observed with the NDZ and CR7 slates of the ANC. However, political maturity

needs to be exemplified to avoid the degeneration of slates into permanent factions dividing the Organizations.

4. Q. Does the concept of "Kuhlakula" exist in SNAT?

No. The Credentials Committee does everything within its powers to consult nominees to ask for any information to satisfy the requirements of the standard nomination for.

The Credentials Committee wishes the General Membership [GM] of the SNAT the best as they engage in the

building of the Union through the ballot box. In conclusion, we wish to reiterate the importance of engaging our minds in every decision we make so that we manifest in reality the long time SNAT slogan: **"Not by Favour but by merit". Aluta continua!! Viva SNAT Viva!!**



Manzini Branch Shopstewards during their Workshop at the SNAT Centre on the 30th of November 2021 [Courtesy Pic.]



# MEN ENGAGE NETWORK SWAZILAND



**BONGINKOSI NDLANGAMANDLA**

Men Engage National Co-ordinator



The organization, MenEngage Network Swaziland was launched in 2013 with the goal of working collaboratively to promote the engagement of men and boys in achieving gender equity, preventing HIV, promoting human rights and reducing violence at all levels across the country, including questioning the structural barriers to gender inequalities. The Swaziland Network is a Member of Men Engage Africa, who is a member of MenEngage Global Alliance.

The Eswatini Network is made up of civil society organizations involved in gender programming and implementation with an interest in engaging men and boys to advance gender equity. Currently, the network consists of 46 organizations.

Eswatini is one of the sub-Saharan countries with the highest gender inequalities, ones which women's rights organizations in Eswatini continue to fight against. Women's rights organizations have done excellent work in civic education on women's rights violation. The Men Engage Network simply complements the work of such organizations through the perspective of male involvement in fighting against gender inequality. As allies of the WRM, we involve men and boys not as perpetrators, but as agents of change.

The approach is based on establishing male champions, speaking as active agents and stakeholders who can transform social norms, behaviors and gender stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination and inequality. Men and boys are involved in this work by first making them understand the privilege they possess because of patriarchy since the patriarchal system places men as dominant and women are treated as secondary citizens. This then leaves women to bear the brunt end of the stick. Research conducted in highly patriarchal countries like Eswatini illustrates how men and boys lack a health seeking behavior culture. Stoicism is one of the characteristics of the ideal masculine construct embedded in patriarchal behavior. In Eswatini and Globally men and boys dominate the jail populace which comes as end results of the socialisation that makes men and boys to interact in volatile behaviour. In

Eswatini, suicide mortality rates are higher amongst men and boys. One of the contributions of these are the excessive societal expectations.

As MenEngage, we use the Gender Transformative Norms methods which seeks to confront dangerous social norms and practices that perpetuate gender inequality.

The network does not only seek to achieve individual transformation but we also push for systemic transformation.

The network engages various institutions such as duty bearers, traditional Leaders, religious leaders and any other forms of community leadership. Amongst other activities the MenEngage Network has conducted a study on the drivers of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Eswatini. The findings show that there is a strong need for interventions that target the structures of socialization like: family, school, religious institutions, traditional institutions.



MenEngage with male champions and change agents [File Pic.]

# ESWATINI VIOLATES FUNDAMENTAL WORKERS' RIGHTS



**ARNKIL JENNI**

Organisation Manager [Trade Union of Education in Finland]

In 2020, the Trade Union of Education in Finland OAJ, the Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland SASK and the SNAT started their cooperation project. We launched the project with a strong belief that the partnership will contribute building up a better future

for teachers in Swaziland. When I visited Eswatini in March 2020, little did we know about the windy weather ahead of us - and you. The global pandemic [COVID-19] has changed our

everyday life, teaching and the status of the teachers in many ways. We have had to face the restrictions in many levels and areas of life in the name of the pandemic - and in some cases the restrictions seem to have come to stay. In addition to the severe consequences

of the pandemic (partly yet to be seen), you have faced a very difficult situation in SNAT and in Eswatini in general. The crisis you have faced concerning the struggle for democracy, trade union and human rights is something that we have been following with growing concern and we wish to express our solidarity to you, teachers of Swaziland. As Education International (EI) and its' Executive Board expressed in November, it has been shocking to hear about the use of force against the peaceful protesters, who have been seeking for better - or at least decent - working conditions for teachers and other public sector workers. This is something that we strongly condemn as does the EI.

Eswatini is a member of International Labour Organisation ILO and the United Nations. This means that Eswatini is committed to the ILO's and



The SNAT/OAJ Cooperation banner [File Pic.].

relevant Conventions.

There are four [4] categories in this Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. These categories are; freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. These rights are universal, and they apply to all people in all States - regardless of the level of economic development or

constitution a I institutions or political system. In the context of Eswatini at the moment one of the most important categories is the first one: Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to



Workers' in Swaziland on the streets [File Pic.]

UN's principles of democracy and human rights. One example of these declarations is the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work commits Member States to respect and promote principles and rights mentioned in the declaration, whether or not they have ratified the

collective bargaining. The right of workers and employers to form and join organisations of their own choosing is an integral part of a free and open society. This should be the case in Eswatini as well. These organisations have played a strong role in democratic transformations, and this should not be





The OSSU ready to shoot to kill protesters (Courtesy of SNAT Media).

seen as a threat but as an opportunity to build up a better future for all people. Collective bargaining is also a fundamental right. Collective bargaining is the key method through which employers and their organizations and trade unions can establish fair wages and working conditions. But this needs functional and official trade unions, and those should be seen as an important part of the modern society. In Finland the welfare of the state and the people is built based on strong cooperation with the state and the organisations of the employers and workers.

United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights is also something that the member states should appreciate every day. Some examples of the articles: Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association; No one may be compelled to belong to an association; The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay; Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family,

including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. In addition to these, there are some significant principles concerning work in the article 23:

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

These important principles of ILO's and UN's Declarations are something that one can lean on if they are not yet fully appreciated. In this regard we are concerned about the situation in Eswatini, and we hope that you have the strength and courage to continue

peaceful protests and demands for these principles to come true. We condemn all the use of force against peaceful protests and teachers, and we hope that a brighter future is just around the corner for Eswatini teachers and children. We encourage you, the teachers of the Eswatini to continue to stand strong and peacefully protest to enhance democracy, human rights and for a better future for the children and the workers of Eswatini. Thank you for that. You are not alone.

In solidarity!



ILO Logo

# ASKING EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS IN A CLASSROOM



**DAVID BIRD**

Director and Owner of Nilsbird Training

I am writing to you on a Thursday evening, in October, having just completed four [4] live webinars for Mathematics teachers (I have a recording left to do for the last day of training), some of whom attended from your country! Today's webinar was about questions and, funnily enough, that will be the subject of this article!

At the end of my first article, I briefly considered this statement: I ask questions in the classroom because ... I said that it is important, I think, that we know how we would finish this statement. Do you agree? If you do, or don't, have you ever considered how you would finish this statement?

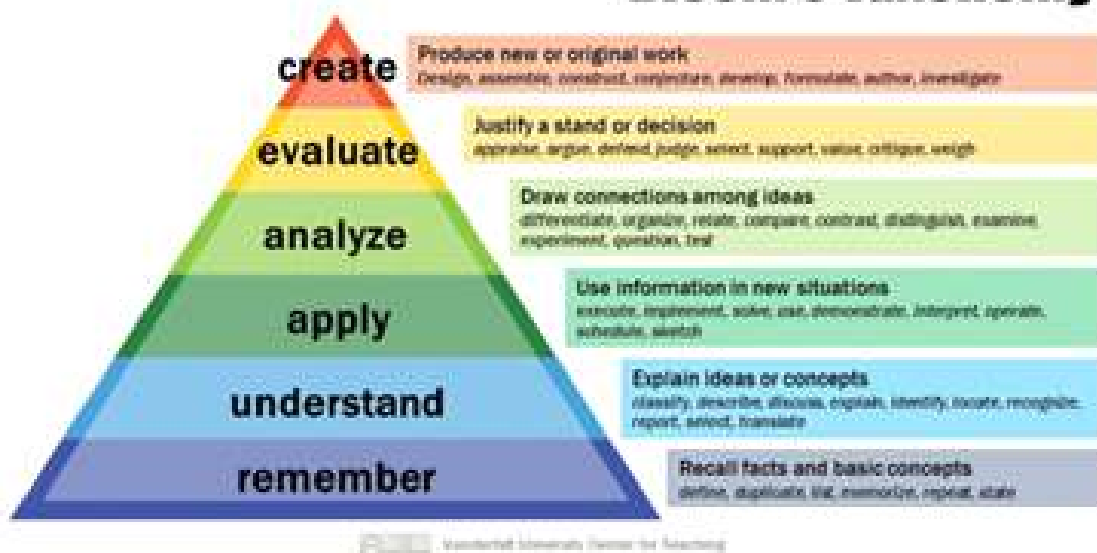
As part of one approach in talking about questions with teachers, a phrase that I use is the following: Questions are designed to make the learner think. It comes from a man who was involved, in the past, with the development of mathematics education in the United Kingdom – Malcolm Swan. One set of resources that Malcom Swan helped develop were: The Standards Unit: Improving Learning in Mathematics. (They are an extremely well thought out set of mathematics lessons, designed for the 16 – 18 age range, that I would recommend to anyone!) So, thinking again about this statement: Questions are designed to make the learner think.

of these true for you?

- To find out about student understanding.
- It helps students learn.
- So that the teacher has time to collect their thoughts.
- It challenges students to think!
- To provide encouragement to students.
- To emphasise specific teaching points.

From the list above (which is not exhaustive), we can see that there are a variety of reasons to ask questions. (I have to admit that the key thing for me is what Malcom Swan said about getting learners to think!)

## Bloom's Taxonomy

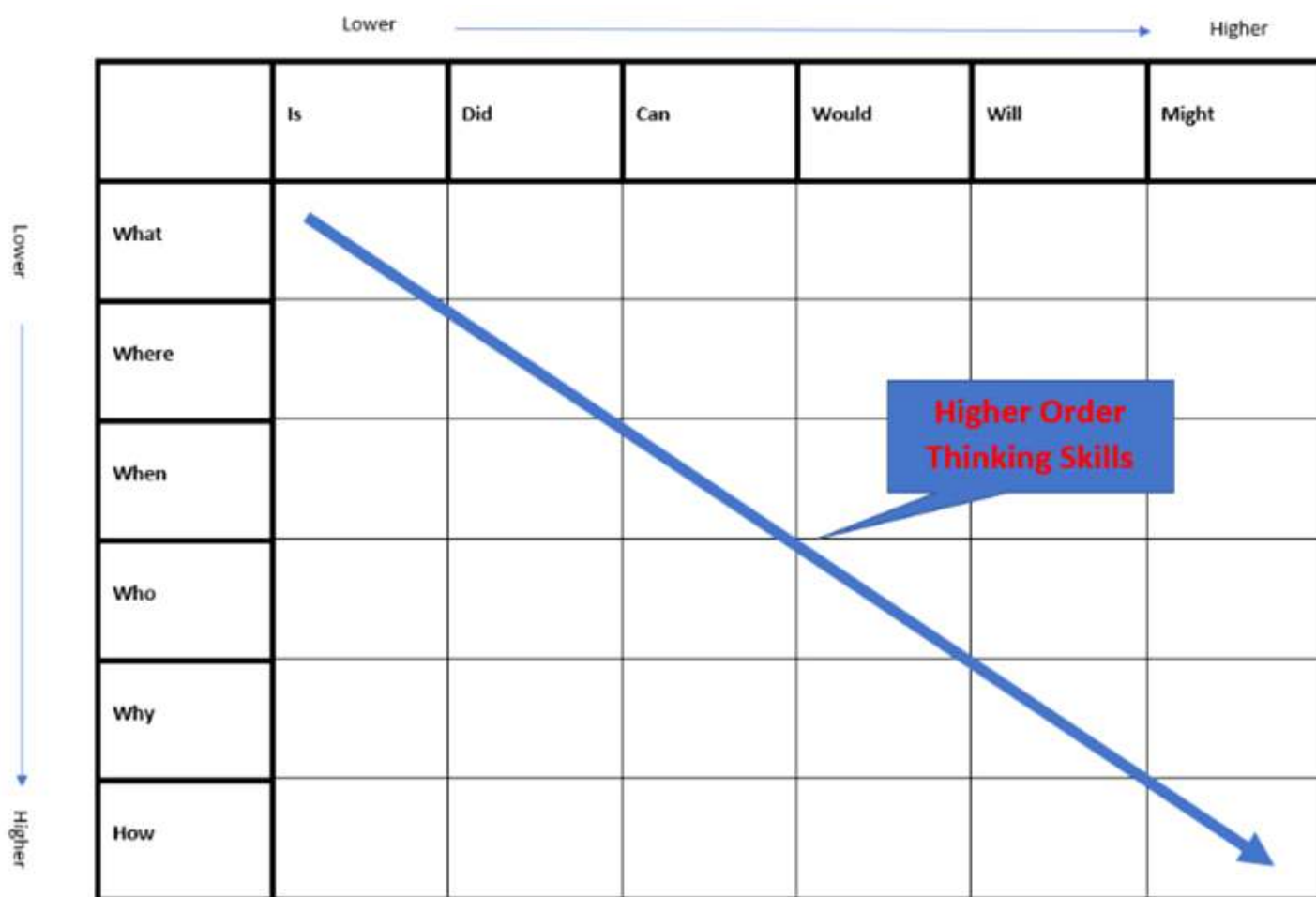


When we consider our questions, do we close things down, or open things up? In other words, do we ask closed questions (where there is a definitive answer), or open questions

Do you agree? Would you say it is always, sometimes, or never true? (During my webinar today, I asked the teachers whether the statement is always, sometimes, or never true. Their conclusion was sometimes.) If you say sometimes, what are some other reasons for asking questions? Are any

(where there, could well be, more than one answer). I would argue that we need a combination of both types of questions, but open questions are the ones that really make learners think! If you remember back to your days at college/university, you might have come across Bloom's Taxonomy.





Whether you like it, or not, I think it can help us when we consider the kinds of questions we can ask in the classroom. (The image shown on the next page shows a revised version of the taxonomy.) When we look at the taxonomy, we can see that closed questions would sit at the bottom, and as you move up the diagram, the questions, that could be asked, become more and more open. (And when you get to the top, we get the opportunity to ask one of my favourite questions: If this is the answer, what's the question?)

Now, as mathematics is my subject area, here are three examples of what I would consider are open, more challenging questions:

- Can you give me an example of ... a Pythagorean triple?
- How can you tell ... that the trapezium and the square have the

same area?

- Why do you think ... the ratio between the two values is 3:7?

I am sure you can come up with open, more challenging questions related to your subject areas, as in: How can you tell that air quality levels are poorer in the centre of Mbabane?

So, as what I have described above is one approach to discussing questions, what might be another? Well, this question grid is another way of thinking about questions:

From the top left-hand corner to the bottom right-hand corner, the types of questions become open, more challenging questions; described on the grid as Higher Order Thinking Skills. This idea can be related back to Bloom's Taxonomy. The top left-hand corner being the knowledge and following the arrow down is then similar to moving up the taxonomy.

To finish these thoughts on questions, a colleague of mine, Ann Starks, shared some interesting ideas during a recording of a webinar on questions. These included pose, pause, pounce, bounce; echo; thinking hats. These other ideas demonstrate that there is far more that can be said about questions. Another article is needed in the future, I would say!

Thanks for reading this second article. I hope it provided you with something to contemplate when you next ask a question in the classroom. One thing I would say is: Asking effective questions doesn't need any resources, whatsoever!

Until next time.

# ARE WE HIS PEOPLE?



**CEBSILE MHLANGA**

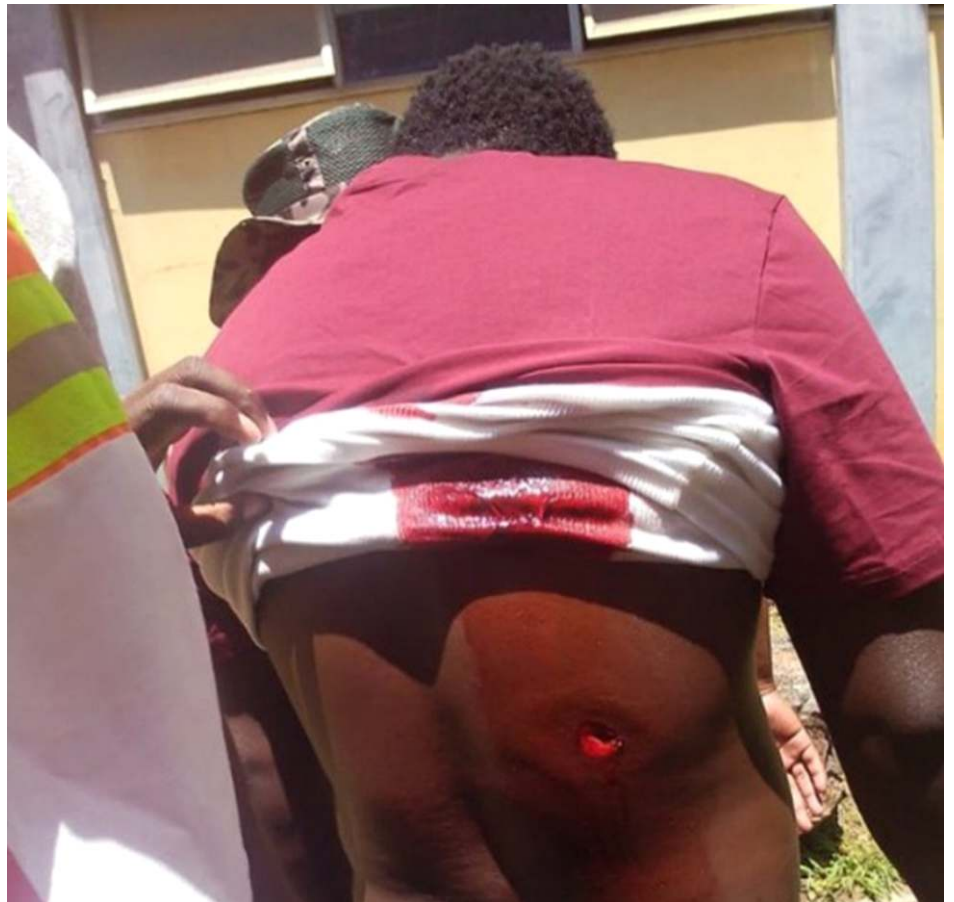
Hhohho Regional Secretary

**T**he rough patches have created such unbearable strain for the rest of the terrain. It has been a ruthless one indeed, the escalating gradient making it more cumbersome by day. Who perceived what was lying ahead of us? This journey we traverse has always had its hidden side. Shockingly exciting sometimes yet at other points fascinatingly traumatic. October diaries feature amongst those we dare to bury-vividly inscribed in historical records of workers of Swaziland. Why would we want to be reminded of those occurrences we cannot live with? Their throbbing thud sends shivers down our spines. What kind of living beings choose to cause such feelings to their own kind? Only a sadist thrives in getting others to suffer. There is, however, no room for sadists in our communities. Not when we were all born of humanity, all born of a woman! Worse, not when we exist in thee natures' copy that is not so eternal. Karma has a way of showing its cruel head. Neither the rich nor poor can boast of escaping from such an ontological fact.

The worse day amongst others within October- when the sinking of the heart cannot adequately depict what transpired- was the aggressive attack on unarmed teachers in a bus. Imagine how suffocating teargas is in a vacuum, and on the 20th it was thrown into a bus. A bus which ferried teachers from

Piggs' Peak who had an honest intent to deliver a petition to their employer in Mbabane. Such an act is clearly articulated in the Industrial Relations Act of 2000 [as amended], Section 40 (1) 'An employee who is not engaged in an essential service has a right to take part in a peaceful action to promote socio-economic interests of workers...' Were these comrades not peaceful? Or, are they less of employees for them to have been violated in such a brutal manner. How does a Christian country find it fit to inflict so much pain to the citizens? Why is Swaziland perpetually governed by hypocrisy? Does it mean that we should suffer in silence simply because those at the echelons of power

do not support our cause? This violence must be eliminated for the country to realise the much acclaimed victory against suppression of human rights. We vehemently condemn these limitations enshrined in Section 24 of the Swaziland Constitution as they are not in good faith and are a gross violation of our rights. They hence promote the gender based violence we are up in arms with currently. We must succinctly articulate our distaste on the way we are being treated as citizens and workers of the country. If the issuance of workers' salary review was made an order of the Court in 2016, why are we subjected to so much discrimination for calling this our



One of our comrades shot at by the OSSU on the 20th of October 2021 in Mbabane [Courtesy Pic.].





The Swazi News revealing how a pupil was shot and killed by cops on Wednesday, 20 October 2021 [Courtesy Pic.]

government to order and demanding that this order is implemented? The judiciary infringements where workers are concerned will never be welcome. We shall fight tooth and nail to be granted what rightly belongs to us. The authoritative text guiding the Christian principles never condones this unfair labour practice. The giving to Caesar what belongs to him response from Jesus demonstrates how inevitable it is to withhold due payments. This salary review belongs to us and must be granted without prejudice. The Prophet Amos 5:24 "But let justice roll like a river, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream" verse is what this our employer has to abide by if the claims on being Christ-like are anything to go by. Otherwise it is all a fallacy following the endless proclamations by the King and his subjects on how God this, God that.

He shall still prevail. There are no favourites with that one, at least, hence the divine retribution. It is consequential to one's blunders- to each according to their deeds. Our struggle is real; our efforts can never be in vain. All the forms of atrocities shall never annihilate the spirit of a united force for the good that is deserved. Soldiering-on is what we shall do! All other battles we shall triumph over. We wish a speedy recovery and healing to all affected comrades. Our deepest condolence to all fallen heroes, your blood shall not be spilt in vain. The fruits of these sacrifices shall be enjoyed by generations to come-SALUTE!

Bragging is not in our DNA, but we could not suppress the awe on Comrade spider's intervention. A conspicuous indication of how things fall into perspective with karma

They are only making useless sounds which are not deserving of our attention.

Life is a vicious cycle which has a way of haunting those doers of evil at a given point in time. And when it does, all the onlookers shudder. It can only be a matter of time. Being in bed with the aristocrats is not a guarantee of any bed of roses as we breathe in and out. As long as the one who held out his hand for the cosmological existence to be initiated watches over His people,

principles. We might have no silver and gold in our hands as Peter declared to the beggar seated by the temple entrance- neither weapons shall we ever yield- in peace we will always make our petitions, no matter how much of a bitter pill to swallow they could appear to be. Otherwise, the peanuts earned can never be improved. We insist on the fight for improved salaries- nothing for us without us. Corrupt practises are vigorously condemned. Selfishness should be arrested at dawn. The public purse should benefit us all! We are the citizens of this country. The system should treat us in high esteem as the economy is on our shoulders. We deserve better and fervently condemn any acts of violence against authentic demands of being counted in this country- it is where we belong. Let our voices be heard!



The Military OSSU preparing to shoot to kill harmless comrades in Mbabane on the 20th of October 2021 [Courtesy Pic.]



OSSU firing teargas to protesters on Wednesday October 20, 2021 in Mbabane [Courtesy Pic.]

# NAME AND SHAME THEM OR ELSE SHUT UP



**LOT 'GADAFFI' VILAKATI**

Siteki Top Secretary

**M**y take is the ongoing onslaught, blackmail, smear campaign, cheap politics, political toddlers' stunts, grand standing, mud sliding tactics. My take is the hatred, spirit killing, soul murder, profession murder: I mean the union bashing. Our members are threatened by the Government of Swaziland. It should not be forgotten that the SNAT is the only Union legally representing

teachers in the country. Noise makers must shut up. The whole idea of saying teachers are inciting students it's a lame excuse of adhering to responsibility by those in power. We cannot take it anymore, particularly those who have made it a profession to nail as black sheep yet teachers' are professionals.

Maybe we can clarify that our role as teachers is to enlighten students about life and everything that relates to it. That's our job. To say we have gone to the extreme of inciting our clients is hitting far below the belt. As history teachers, we will teach them about all leadership styles as part of the syllabus. We are not shaken when doing our job.

Those who are busy calling for our heads must bring proof to the fore or else we will deal with them through the Legal Route. We will sue them. We

cannot allow the defamation of our characters by those who own the media and mobile networks. It is enough. One paramount thing is that Government must address the issues raised by students and parents together with some headteachers in their meetings. Government should leave teachers alone. If there is anything they want to say to us, they must engage the SNAT National Executive Committee. We are free to host them at the revolutionary house, the SNAT Centre. We can go there. Maybe we can share one or two things with them. That one can be very much in order other than dragging the organisation and our Comrades' names in the mud.

Today, as I'm penning here, we are left with a month to finish 2021 without any increment and you ask yourself where on Earth such is happening in this era? It's only in Eswatini because not even in Swaziland such happened.



Workers' in a protest action. The author believes that workers deserve better than what the Eswatini Government is doing currently [Courtesy Pic.]



# EDUCATION PHILANTHROPIST TURNED LITERATURE AWARDS FOUNDER WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARDS



**Ms. PAULA OTUKILE**

Well-travelled Author

In September 2008, Young Paula O. M. Otukile registered a literature project called Mulher Forte African literature Pty Ltd, after her diaspora from Angola, Luanda where she taught English at Collegio Oceano da Luz in Viana.

The main objective of the project was to publish books and manage writers and poets as well as host workshops and campaigns on burning issues in literature world such as bogus publishers and legitimate ones, Surviving Covid-19 as artists, and Gender based violence and sexual abuse awareness workshops, and Annual Literature Awards.

The first awards project passed successfully and this year awards are on their second phase, the second Mulher Forte African literature awards 2022, are left with a month and weeks to Grand finale, preparations are ongoing. The event has gained more popularity in Kenya, Uganda, Lesotho, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia to name but a few. This year, they already got free publishing of books for winners as publishers across Africa who pledged their services to help uplift the event.

The monetary sponsors are slow but its quiet promising. Fortunately, the awards project has won Ms Otukile a path in literature world. She has been featured in Kenya, Lesotho and Swaziland as well as Zimbabwe. To put the cherry on top, she received an award at the AfriCAN authors Honoree Awards in Johannesburg, South Africa, for her children's book "Thato Wishes to

be a Butterfly."

Paula has collaborated with Thami Magongo from Swaziland to write Eswatini- Tswana drum a book still pending release.

The book shall be finally released before the end of December 2021, as editing is underway. This is a collection of Setswana culture poetry with a beat of Eswatini culture to give the poetry lovers the flare of both cultures. On the 30th of November 2021, Otukile received another award as International Woman of the Year Award 2021 in Delta state in Nigeria, for her Gender based violence and sexual abuse awareness workshops and campaigns emancipating Girl child.



Ms Paula showcasing some of her books [Courtesy Pic.]

# PREPARING FOR RETIREMENT



**TERRENCE THWALA**

Financial Advisor

It is yet again that time where we seat and look at how best can we manage our funds. Today, I want us to address one critical issue that is never a reality until it becomes a reality. When we graduate, we always look forward to our first pay and the things we want to achieve, but really a few ever think about retirement.

Retirement looks distant to everyone until you turn 55 and reality strikes that you still have a lot to do than the time permits. The pain of leaving that staff room, those colleagues and that school that had consumed the better part of your livelihood starts crippling in, but do not worry, today we want to guide you on how to handle that.

Retirement, especially in this field comes with mixed emotions, and mostly it finds a number of our people with compromised financial mental strength, yet it avails ample time and lump sum (gratuity) to the pensioner. The combination of having ample time and money in your pockets usually leads to catastrophic results and today we intend to highlight what you need to do when you are about to retire so that when you are finally paid, you are ready to handle those funds well. Retirement planning: this being the process of determining how you will live your life post retirement, which takes into consideration trying to organize your finances prior to receiving them so that when the time comes, you invest to grow the money rather than building

homes, something you should have done at your prime. The time in planning also helps one to prepare after paid work ends. Prior to retirement, you need to consider the following things.

1. Know your retirement needs: The sad truth is that your standard of living will have to change immediately you stop working. That is attributable to the fact that you will be paid your once off gratuity (lump sum), then be paid your annuity on a month-to-month basis. Thereafter, your month-to-month income will now be a fraction of your normal income, so you need to assess your post retirement that can be afforded through your new pay structure.

2. Know more about your employer's pension plan: Understanding the pension you are part of will help you in your planning process, so enquire how the



whole process goes. Most of the time people usually assume that they will instantly become tycoons ignoring the fact that they will get a fraction of the gratuity pay out and be taxed at annuity stage. So, knowing this information will help you plan well, and within what you will receive.

3. Financial Planning: taking stock of what you have, and what you will receive gives you a clear picture of how much you will need to spend per month to survive. This information cannot help you much, and it is at this stage where you need a certified financial advisor, so that you can be advised on how best you can invest your money to ensure you are secured for life. You and your financial advisor will draw a plan on how your money can work for you and in most cases identifying investments that will let you harvest monthly interests, while the principal remains unchanged.

4. Seeing a psychologist to prepare you emotionally for money: In our culture we do not see the need for mental health, but it is very critical to be prepared for receiving money. We can plan all we want and have the best financial strategies to direct the money, but if we are not mentally ready, we can get excited and find that our emotions took the lead, and before we know it the money is gone, and one cannot tell what they did with it. 5. Think of how you can make your money make you money: Remember that your salary has been slashed, and your gratuity is a once off, so it is very critical to think of how you can grow your money to ensure that you never run dry. More than anything, have it at the back of your mind that this is not the time to take debts because the money you will be getting monthly is only enough to cover your basic needs. Though you will be legible to be loaned money, it is advisable to at least think of strategies that will give you money than to be paying out interests.

6. You are not a bank: It is very hurting to see retired people chasing their neighbours because they owe them money. It cannot be overemphasized that once people know that you had been paid your gratuity, they will come flocking to look for soft loans, and never make the mistake of falling for that trap. People who are capable of borrowing money must borrow from banks, because you cannot spend your old age times chasing after people who owes you.

The two [2] greatest concern for the future of a retiree are financial security and health coverage, so whatever you do with your money post retirement must never tamper with the two [2]. Any retirement planning must be centered around the two [2]. It is advisable to start planning at least a couple of years before the actual retirement. At this age, unless you remain physically active, you are likely to visit the Doctor more. Therefore, always surround yourself with people who will not want to benefit from your situation.

If you are about to receive your retirement, one must say that you are indeed blessed, so take note of the above and you will have the most fulfilling retirement life.



# INTRODUCING THE SNAT LEGAL OFFICER'S SECRETARY



**SAMKELISIWE SIBANDZE**

Secretary of the SNAT Legal Officer

**S** **NAT Media [SM]:** Good day Comrade Samkelisiwe.

**Samkelisiwe Sibandze [SS]:** Good day to you too Mr. Motsa and the SNAT family at large. Thank you for having me.

**SM:** Tell us about Samkelisiwe Sibandze.

**SS:** Samkelisiwe Sibandze is a 2019 graduate from Eswatini College of Technology and in possession of a Diploma in Computer Science. She is a Former employee of the National Tuberculosis Control programme where I worked as an Information and Technology intern in the year 2018 which exposed me to the cooperate world and increased my ambition in working with data thus bringing me to where I am now, as the SNAT Legal Secretary. The few past months working as a Legal Secretary have given me the opportunity to bring on board the computer, confidential as well as proactive and driven skills to action as I work with different cases that touch on the lives of the SNAT members.

**SM:** We have seen you around the SNAT for a while now. How does it feel being part of the SNAT? Are you a comrade at heart?

**SS:** I feel welcomed and honoured, being part of SNAT family: an organization that does not only concentrate in working

**T**he SNAT has a new employee in the Legal Department: Samkelisiwe Sibandze, as the Secretary of the SNAT Legal Officer. We took time to engage her as the SNAT Media.

towards fulfilling the organization's mission; rather, further strives to elevate its members to the higher ladder of success. The SNAT does this by protecting and supporting them not only in the presence but also in the coming future as they make sure that they are heard, respected as well as appreciated. It gives me the opportunity to put in action my skills and knowledge as there is always a room for improvement with the SNAT. In addition, yes I am a comrade at heart, as I believe in comrade ideal principles, which are, to name a few: restorative justice, unity, empathy as well as collective value.

**SM:** If you can give us a clue. What does being a Secretary of the Legal Officer entail? What are your specific responsibilities?

**SS:** Well, being a Legal Officer's Secretary means that you are part of the Legal Team or profession and assist with the smooth running of the Legal department. It needs you to be hyperactive as there is always urgent matters that need immediately attention. It requires legal knowledge as there are terms that only the legal personnel understand which makes it more interesting as it encourages one to climb the legal ladder. Responsibilities include but not limited to:

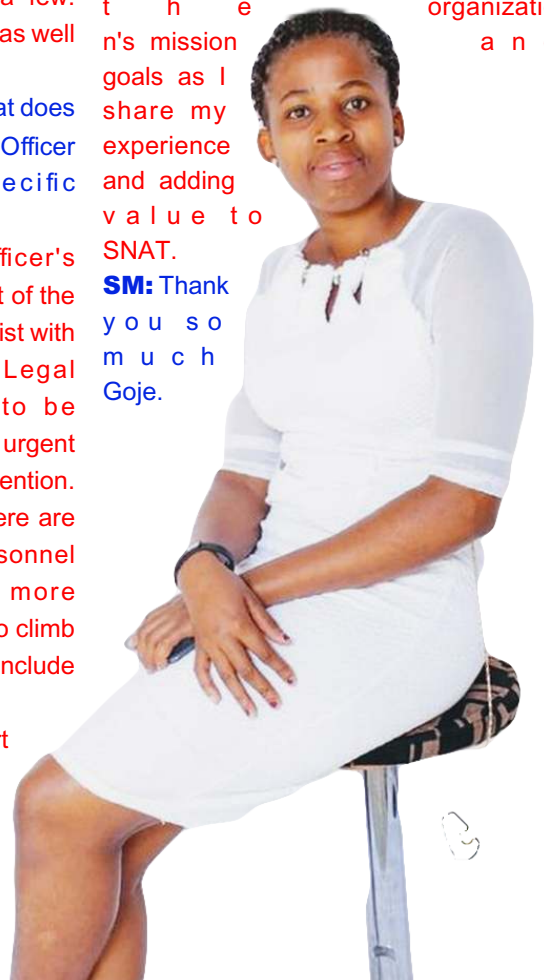
- Provide administrative support to the Legal Officer and making sure decisions taken are not in expense of the organization.
- Attend hearings and take minutes

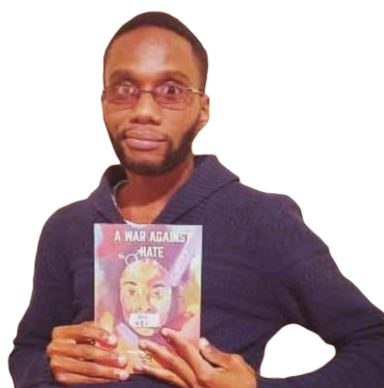
- Conduct thorough statistical/ documentary research before taking actions
- Produce and file various legal documents such as appeals, motions or petitions
- Make appointments for the Legal Officer as well as managing his diary.

**SM:** We are pleased to have you at the SNAT. We wish you all the best in your new responsibility.

**SS:** Thank you, so much Mr. Motsa and the SNAT family. I'm also looking forward to working with you all in achieving the organization's mission goals as I share my experience and adding value to SNAT.

**SM:** Thank you so much Goje.





**THAMI MAGONGO**

Author and Poet

## NGINGUBANI MINE



Ngingubani  
Ngingubani mine  
I am Mario  
I am the power of resurgence  
I always knew there were others like me  
I looked into the future one day  
My heart started racing  
My teeth started vibrating  
Something was calling to me  
Emancipation was hailing to me  
Ngingubani  
Ngingubani mine  
I am Jan  
The world has sped up  
Sped up since I was last part of the world  
I am remembered  
I am remembered fondly  
Hundreds of the things you have read  
about me are untrue  
Twenty seven of the things you have read  
about me are all true  
Ngingubani  
Ngingubani mine  
I am Thabani  
Shall I show you my power  
My power I have performed with influence  
and vibration

Ngingubani  
Ngingubani mine  
I am Sibongile  
Diligent and persistent  
I am Bacede  
I am Mthandeni  
Sworn and committed  
Ask me what I did  
Ask me what we did  
You ask me  
Ngingubani  
Ngingubani mine  
I am Mphandlana  
An iron and unbending  
I am Mbedzi  
Hearty and purposeful and yet I always  
hated this room  
Last night and the other night  
An ally was ended right here in this very  
room  
Inside these four ugly walls  
I don't belong to these walls  
These walls disregard my will to survive  
These walls need me to reach deep  
Reach deep and exercise my strength  
Hear, hear  
I believe  
I believe we can build on the progress  
we've made  
We've made a headway  
Ngingubani  
Ngingubani mine  
June latched on and impaired my  
daughters  
Those were my sons July slaughtered  
The day they were born  
I sent such hopes and dreams to heaven  
Discord and strife  
That's how it ended  
In flames and decay  
Hear, hear  
Ngingubani  
Ngingubani mine  
I am the last generation and origination  
Nineteen sixty eight  
Petitions remain unsigned  
Mocking my grief  
Getting no relief  
Justice is so near  
I will have justice  
~Thami

## ALL MONSTERS ARE HUMAN



Your masters  
Your soulless masters  
The ones I call depraved monsters  
The ones I've been trying to bring to ruin  
I want them to feel it  
Rumor has it  
They make some awful thoughts come  
true  
They've a thing for darkness  
Burrowed in deep  
They're the monsters in every one of my  
closets  
My escape from darkness is incomplete  
Death is my only way away from them  
Every time I look at them  
I see my own death  
They are my constant reminder of my  
worse fears  
I am not crying over them  
I am crying for me  
I am crying for the girl in me who dies  
I am crying for every sick thing they did to  
me  
My skin is crawling with fear  
My world hangs in the balance  
Tell me what you want  
I mean, everybody wants something in life  
Surprise me  
Because what I see is a man  
But not a man  
Surprise!  
What you see is a woman  
But a woman who's spent so much of her  
life running  
Running in the opposite direction of you  
For never thinking beyond your selfish  
desires  
~ Thami



# BUILDING STRONG FAITH



**WELCOME NGWENYA**

Anointed Man of God

**T**he Book of Hebrews 11:1 says: Now faith is the confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. There are two [2] key words in the portion of scripture above that are key to the definition of faith: **C**onfidence and assurance/certainty

These two [2] qualities need a secure beginning and ending points. The beginning point of faith is believing God's character – he is one who says He is. The end is believing in God's promises – he will do what he says. Faith is believing God even though we do not see those promises materializing. Abraham demonstrated such faith when he believed God for a son yet he was one hundred years and Sarah's womb was as good as dead, we are told that he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God (Romans 4: 18–22). Abraham was fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised.

1. Faith is based on God's Character

John 7: 38 He who believes in me (who cleaves to and trusts in me and relies on me as the scripture has said, from his innermost being shall flow (continuously) springs and rivers of living water.

- God is trust-worthy, He can be trusted and we can believe every word He says.

The book of Numbers 23:19 states the following concerning the trust-worthiness of God – God is not a man, that He should tell or act a lie, neither the son of man, that He should feel repentance or compunction (for what He has promised). Has He said and shall He not do it? Or has He spoken and shall He not make it good.

In the Book of 1 John 1:5 the Apostle John states that God is light and in Him there is

8-9) the Bible states that: 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

- The fact the He is true this means He is reliable; we can confidently declare what He has promised to be true upon our lives.

A strong belief in God or the assurance in God made others to win divine approval even though they did not receive the fulfilment of what was promised (Hebrews 11:39).

- This scripture reveals the basic dimension of faith of believing in God even if one does not receive the things in the short-term but believes in the long-term picture or the overall.

1. Faith is also certainty of God's promises

A simple faith in God's promises is illustrated in the following portion of scriptures:

Hebrews 11: 17 -19 by faith Abraham when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who embraced the promise was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him it is

through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, so in the manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.

Mark 11:24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours.

- We do not need to struggle but simply take Him from His word. We do not need to add nor subtract anything from



no darkness at all.

In both scriptures, we see that God is different – he is unlike human beings who cannot be trusted because they lack total faithfulness. We are told that He is not a man that He should lie and we are also told that He is light and in Him there is no darkness.

- When we say God is light, we mean He is perfectly holy and true – different from human beings. (Isaiah 55:

His word

- This is true faith in God
- Faith alone makes a difference – it heals, saves and above all it gives us eternal life with Christ.
- Everything that has to do with our relationship with God starts and ends in faith (Romans 1:17 – a righteousness that is by faith from the first to the last).

### Steps in building a strong faith

This is an unwavering faith which was demonstrated by Abraham who is referred to as the father of faith.

**Step 1:** Strengthen your faith through habitually hearing the word of God Romans 10:17 so then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

- When you keep on hearing something often, it gradually shapes your mind and your entire life.

- Faith is built and strengthened when one keeps on hearing the word of God

- Hearing is very dangerous, what one hears can either make her or destroys her. That is why we need to be selective as to what we hear.

- If we keep on hearing the devil, circumstances, our friends and our environments – fear can develop but when we decide to hear God and His word faith develops.

- When we have faith, nothing is impossible to us (Mark 9:23 “all things are possible to him who believes.”)

- This will finally affect the way we think and our entire perspective into things

- This will also change our character and behaviour (Proverbs 23:7 – as a man thinketh in his heart so is he)

**Step 2:** Strengthen your faith through believing the word

- It is one thing to hear the word and it is another to believe the word (James 1:22 do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves)

- Believing the word changes things around (Romans 10: 9-10 confess and believe in your heart, you will be saved

- This implies that without belief in ones' heart there is no salvation

- Believing the word of God means that you begin to have a strong trust on God and upon His character

- His ways are true, He said I am the way, the truth and the light (John 14:6)

- The Bible is the only book that can be trusted for its history and its prophecies

- Everything the Bible says comes to pass

- God is the ultimate author of the Word: the Word of God can be trusted as God himself. (2Peter 1:21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the spirit) - This will produce faith that is not shaken

### Keeping the faith

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race and I have kept the faith

- The apostle Paul puts it like we need to contend for our faith

- It is like there is a great pressure to contaminate true faith

- The devil is always attacking us; he is not necessarily attacking us but our faith in God

- That is why Satan asked Eve if God had really said they were not to eat from every tree in the garden.

The attack was to Eve's faith, the serpent wanted Eve to doubt God's instruction thus weakens her faith in God.

- Doubt is one of the weapons the devil uses to attack our faith

- Wrong teachings is; another dangerous weapon Satan uses to weaken our faith in God

- Worldliness and materialism has shipwrecked many Christians' faith

- Paul said he had fought a good fight

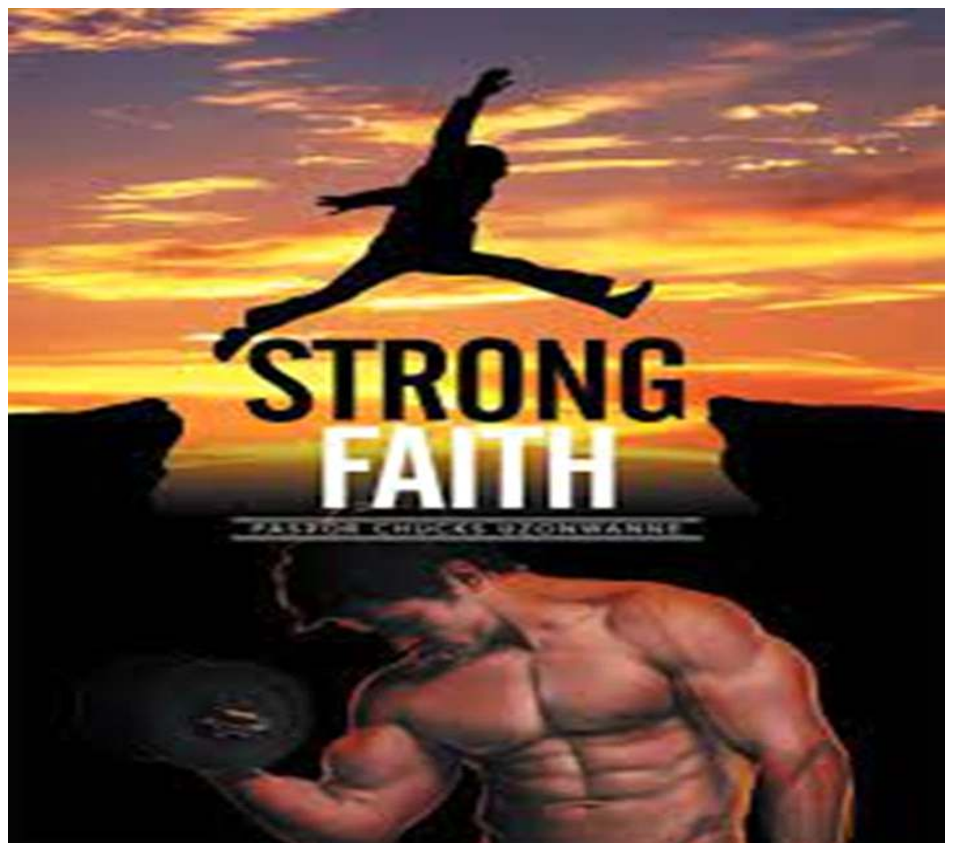
1. Fight to hear the word of God – disciple yourself to hear the word

2. Fight to believe the word choose to believe it even though it may seem not to make sense to you

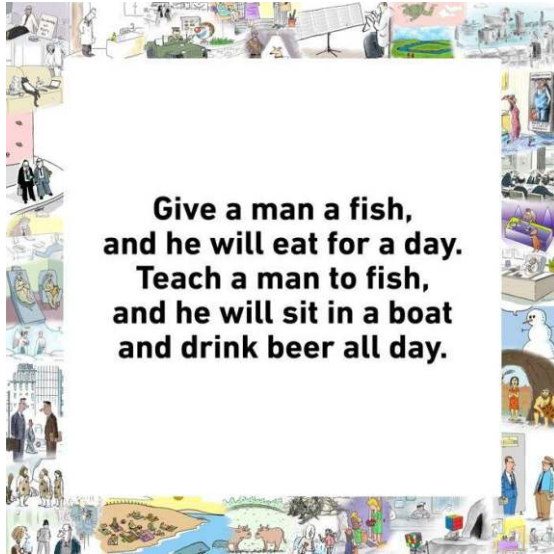
1. Fight to put the word of God into practice

- Put the word of God into practice even against your friends, situation and even against your own will.

- This will constantly grow your faith until it is unshaken and built upon God's promises.

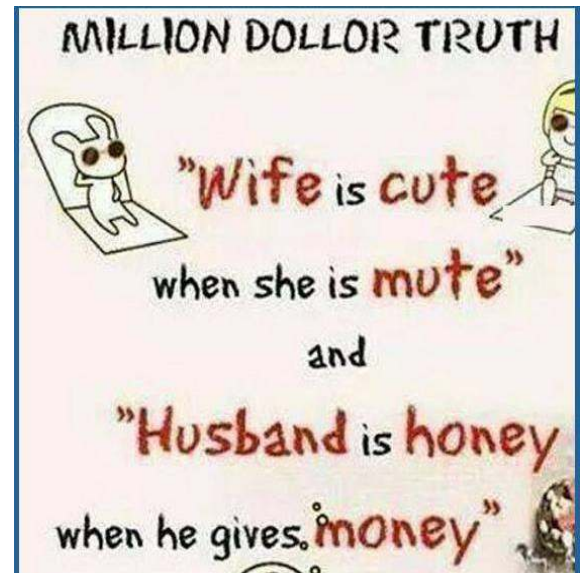






**My friend once called a few house painters to his house for some work. He wanted them to paint his porch. After a few hours, the house painters came back for the payment, as their work was complete. Before leaving, they told my friend that they had enjoyed painting his car, but it is not really a Porsche.**

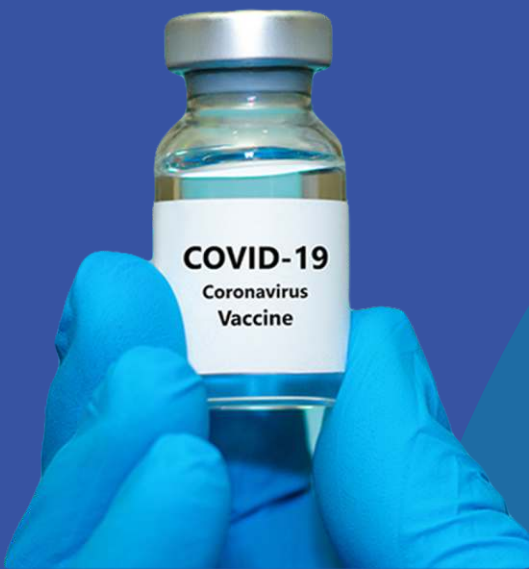
**After Sunday church, the priest would hand us each an orange and a big cookie. A little girl once lied and took two oranges, but the priest told her she must not lie because God is watching. Then, the girl took two cookies and lied about it. When asked why she had done that, she said because she thought that God was only watching oranges.**



**I was visiting the house of a distant cousin when I saw that he was playing chess with his cat. I said that it had to be the most intelligent cat ever. My cousin replied, "Absolutely not! She has lost all her matches!"**



**The SNAT  
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the **vaccination**  
**exercise for**  
**learners**  
**and teachers.**  
We must  
achieve  
herd immunity.**





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