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The Bridge Builder



Email: admin@1economy.org | P.O Box 463 Windhoek
Twitter: @1Namibia | Facebook: One Economy Foundation



ECONOMY
ONE NAMIBIA. ONE ECONOMY

EDITORIAL

One Economy Foundation is a Section 21 Company (Association not for Gain) which is also registered as a Welfare Organisation. The Directors and the program implementers breathe life into this shell and in return, it gives us all a deep sense of purpose. From successfully implementing a robust governance framework to placing our beloved, talented children into a unique educational Fellowship, we are constantly guided to live by our values of being transparent and transformational. From our Gender-Based Violence Pillar to the Collateral Free Fund, we are guided by the desire to sustainably lift our participants out of a cycle of generational poverty. We are painfully aware that our economy is a mirror of social realities and reflects the prejudices and injustices that characterise all unequal societies. Our decision is to implement programs that are specifically engineered to change thinking around conventional ideas of reducing the inequality gap. We are led by the mantra of providing our project recipients with the three C's; Capital, Confidence and Capacity. Redressing inequality takes powerful collective effort and our intention is to play a small but effective role in providing a bridge of opportunity between the first and second economy.

Focusing on inequalities means targeting the poorest of the poor and providing easier access to services in a manner which doesn't intimidate or frustrate them. This has led the design of financial products like the collateral free lending program as well as the Talented Individual Program (Fellowship). Our philosophy is that if our intervention doesn't sustainably lift someone out of poverty, we shouldn't implement it. Inequality is not just about wealth, it's also about power. We see ourselves as a bridge builder and often utilise our network to access opportunities on behalf of the talented and able who lack access to information and networks. We have initiated smart partnerships with individuals like Iiping Shaanika Nashilongo as well as organisations like Tonata People Living with HIV Network. We have also connected the "unconnected" with the resolution of complex access to service issues, access to educational and economic opportunities, nutritional support, psychosocial services, free legal representation and free medical services. The list is as endless as our network which responds to our requests with a sense of compassion that is the life essence that drives our sense of humanity.

We have learnt many lessons but the most powerful lesson learnt; from the inmates we work with, the survivors of GBV and youth in particular is that the real measure of poverty, especially child poverty, is



Monica Geingos
*First Lady of the Republic of Namibia
 Executive Chairperson and Founder of ONE*

love. The lack of love in the upbringing of a child has chilling consequences on their choices and abilities as an adult. Lack of love, fatherlessness, parenting habits – these are all the complex social issues which form part of the problematic pathologies driving GBV and other self-destructive tendencies which appear to be typical of a post conflict society such as ours. We have commissioned research in the Correctional facilities and ECD centres and we are using the research outcomes to inform our interventions. We are focused on providing sustainable interventions for people to retain their dignity and escape the vicious cycle of poverty which can keep generations uneducated, unemployed and in a vortex of self-destructive behaviour. We have heeded the call to become active in our communities and we have been blessed with the satisfaction of seeing concrete outcomes, tears turning into triumph and clear evidence of

providing capital, confidence and capacity to those who have been effectively shut out of the "system."

The reason that such a small Board and five implementers have managed to reach so many milestones, as detailed in this edition, has a lot to do with a collective passion and clear strategic focus. The assistance of volunteers has also been of critical help for overcoming our capacity constraints. From the have a Chartered Accountant who helps us with our books every Friday, to youth volunteers who assist with everything from administration, event management to research. These volunteers have been exceptional and their passion and energy revitalise our own. Long nights in the office have often been punctuated by tears of compassion on behalf of the circumstances of those we assist but we are comforted by seeing tangible and positive outcomes after our interventions.

We hold ourselves to a high level of accountability in terms of program outcomes and utilisation of financial resources. Through our structuring, we manage to spend 97% of funds raised on direct program beneficiaries. This ratio is unheard of and a sure comfort to those whose money and aspirations we manage. We believe that we provide a compelling case for those who want to do good for others but aren't sure whether their efforts and/or money are used efficiently and effectively. Our collective dream of One Economy is taking shape and is demonstrably changing the lives of beneficiaries as well as the lives of all us at One Economy. Thank you for the trust and for empowering us to empower others.



**We are proud to have you as our
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HELPING OTHERS CHANGED MY LIFE

An interview with Ipinge Shaanika Nashilongo - Dr. Veronica Theron



Pictured: Ipinge Shaanika Nashilongo, Madame Monica Geingos, Dr Veronica Theron

Q: Tell us about yourself

A: My name is Ipinge Shaanika Nashilongo. I am 24 years old and a final year PC Engineering student at the Institute of Information Technology (IIT) in Windhoek. I am also the Founder of Monica Gender Violence Solutions.

I was raised by my grandmother in northern Namibia in very difficult circumstances. I failed Grade 10 and came to Windhoek when I was 17. I first worked at a car wash and remember sleeping at the Monte Christo Service Station for more than 3 months. After obtaining a driver's license I started to work as a taxi driver and slept in the taxi until I could afford to rent a shack in Hakahana. As a taxi driver, I started to share my story with people to encourage them. I also fix peoples computers as an additional source of income.

Q: What prompted the idea to start the Monica Gender Violence Solutions (MGVS)?

A: I lost my mom at the age of 5 due to domestic violence. I don't remember much, but I have a vivid recollection of constant beatings, insults, threats and psychological torture. I was too young to help my mother but now it is within my power to help others in similar situations. I came across a YouTube clip where I heard our First Lady, Madame Monica Geingos, talking about gender based violence, displaying leadership and saw her compassionate heart. I followed all her public speaking engagements and that motivated me to start an organisation to assist survivors of gender based

violence. I named it after the First Lady in recognition of the inspiration she had provided. One morning I shared my vision with a customer in the taxi, not knowing that he was a journalist. The journalist noted my mobile number and called me a few days later for an interview and soon thereafter, several newspapers published a story on the work that I had done. From that moment, I made a commitment to myself that I would make Madame Geingos proud and decided to do my best to help her to make a meaningful contribution to gender based violence in Namibia.

Q: Can you share some of your highlights/achievements since you started the Organisation in 2015?

A: Soon after my work was covered in our local media, I received a surprise visit from Madame Geingos. I will never forget that day! She generously donated some money to me, brought me books and other materials that would encourage me and support my endeavours to help others. The Office of the First Lady linked me up with organisations such as Women Action for Development, the Alternatives to Violence Project and the Fatherhood Foundation to gain a thorough understanding of the scope of my community work and better equip me in counselling. I have organised workshops with men, single parents and youth and have reached over 850 individuals since 2015.

I have also been given an opportunity to study by the One Economy Foundation (ONE). The Foundation

pays my school fees and supports in the implementation of my programmes. For example, I allowed Grade 10 and Grade 12 learners from Hage Geingob Secondary School to use my computers to prepare for exams. This helped them improve their results.

In October 2016, the Councillor of Moses Garoeb Constituency offered me office space at their Constituency Offices. The high numbers of people who come for counselling motivate me and remind me that my efforts are not in vain. I refer serious cases to social workers and police officers at the Gender Based Violence Unit at Katutura Hospital.

I am also lucky to have Social Work students from the University of Namibia who have joined MGVS and assist with counselling and support groups. Working closely with the One Economy Foundation (ONE) has helped me build a professional network for my grassroots organization. Often, I receive donations from ONE such as blankets and maize meal which I then distribute to vulnerable members of our society such as orphans and single parents.

Q: What is your advice to your fellow Namibian men?

A: Men are important agents of change. We need to get involved and work towards building a better society especially for our women and children in Namibia.



Pictured: Madame Monica Geingos and Hon. Doreen Sioka comfort a survivor of GBV on International Womans Day

GBV SHAKES THE NATION

By Veronica Theron

The increasing rate of gender based violence (GBV) and violence against children in Namibia has fueled the passion of the One Economy Foundation (ONE) to work with various stakeholders in developing its strategies around interventions for both survivors and perpetrators of GBV.

Through its GBV Pillar, ONE seeks to promote an integrated, survivor-centered, multidisciplinary prevention and response programme. This has prompted for a strong collaboration with the UNAM Social Work Department and Namibia Correctional Services who have undertaken qualitative research studies on gender based violence with a specific focus on how the policy environment in relation to the treatment of GBV survivors can be enhanced.

The key findings of this study will be launched together with the Anti-Violence Campaign and annual global observation of the 16 Days of Activism against GBV. The focus of ONE's GBV activities is anchored in active advocacy through the direct involvement of the First Lady at National and International events and through ongoing initiatives such as the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare's "Spot it to Stop it" which promotes Zero Tolerance for GBV.

Some of the milestones for the GBV Pillar include:

- Using key speaking platforms to highlight issues related to gender based violence, inequality, cultural harmful practices perpetuating GBV, cyber bullying and child online protection, HIV/ AIDS, sexual reproductive health and

rights, child sexual abuse, working with perpetrators, fatherlessness, substance abuse, intergenerational sex, early marriages and violence in general.

- Collaboration with the private sector through the donation of nutritional, financial and material support to approximately 2500 community members in dire need of school uniform, toiletries and stationery. Recipients included children in hospitals, survivors of GBV in shelters, perpetrators in Windhoek Correctional Facility, single parent households, HIV orphans and vulnerable children at care centers in informal settlements or rural homes across the country.
- 90 sewing machines were distributed to individuals and groups who struggle to meet their basic needs as well as female offenders in the Windhoek Correctional Facility.

The need to better understand the complex dynamics of GBV prompted a visit to the Windhoek Correctional Facility where we spent more than 10 hours engaging perpetrators of GBV. After listening to more than 45 perpetrators we realised the urgent need for early intervention and structured programmes to enable meaningful behavioural change by perpetrators.

A memorandum of understanding was also signed between the Office of the First Lady and the Namibia Correctional Service which includes a series of activities

which will ensure the active engagement of inmates in all our outreach and prevention programmes.

ONE facilitated professional training for Correctional Officers and Offenders on garment manufacturing. We met with over 125 stakeholders in approximately 220 meetings to articulate key focus areas, develop collaborative strategies and engage Namibians in need of assistance. We engaged in thought leadership on GBV trained 30 church leaders, 45 life skills teachers from 5 regions, 38 health extension workers, 80 police officers, 27 care givers from the Namibian Children's Home, 105 social work students, 42 social workers in the employ of Ministry of Health and Social Services.

Opinion pieces were prepared and published on cybercrime, child sexual abuse and perpetrators of GBV. We also serve on the Child Online Protection Task Force, the Permanent Task Force for Orphans and Vulnerable Children and the Social Protection Task Force. We have realised how complex GBV is and how society and service providers often underplay the genuine love victims have for their abusive partners/parents and often do not consider all other barriers for leaving the abusive relationships.

ONE strongly believes that we all have a collective responsibility in shaping and changing problematic societal attitudes to violence in general and GBV specifically.



Pictured: Young people express their views on the challenges of adolescence at the launch of the #BeFree Movement, Club London - Windhoek

“WE HAVE A LOT TO SAY BUT NO ONE LISTENS” (#BeFree Movement)

By Veronica Theron

Adolescent girls and young women in Southern Africa are disproportionately affected by HIV and Namibia is no exception. #BeFree was established as an uncomplicated way of engaging young people on the issues that hold them back from reaching their potential.

The #BeFree Movement aims to encourage open and frank dialogue between adolescents and their parents/guardians on issues affecting our youth and holding them back from reaching their full potential. These issues include:

- adolescent sex,
- HIV/AIDS in adolescents and young people,
- teenage pregnancies,
- sexual reproductive health and rights,
- substance abuse,
- peer pressure,
- constructive parenting,
- intergenerational sex,
- depression and other mental health challenges,
- gender based violence,
- cyber bullying,
- incest and many other issues

This approach has taught ONE some very important lessons about dealing with young people. Firstly need to meet with young people at the places they frequently meet. Secondly, young people communicate differently and we need to ensure that the messages we share can be contextualised and resonate with them.

To date the One Economy Foundation has managed to host events in 4 Regions in Namibia reaching approximately 2035 people ranging from adolescents and young adults, parents, life skills teachers, social workers, psychologists and other experts dealing with youth matters. We also successfully organised a #BeFree event in Zimbabwe. The First Lady was invited to share the lessons learnt through the #BeFree Movement at a special town hall meeting along the margins of the 71st World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

The feedback from adults and youth alike is powerful and has inspired and informed the way forward for the #BeFree Movement. The essence is to create a non-judgmental platform where there can be direct dialogue and information sharing on matters which are hindering young people from being free. It is also a platform where parents and the youth can seek guidance on issues they

would otherwise not discuss or seek solutions for due to their complexity.

An interesting development was the identification of certain limitations within service provision in frontline trauma services and the need for mental health as well as alcohol and drug rehabilitation facilities with a youth orientation. Another issue which came out clearly was the need to advocate for safe places where young people are able to have fun. Boys requested not to be left out of the conversation. This omission is resulting in boys not getting the necessary information and not learning how to deal with emotional and relationship problems.

The essence of #BeFree is speaking frankly to young people and equipping them to make informed decisions. We intend to establish #BeFree Clubs in all 14 Regions of the country and this will guide the evidence based approach ONE relies on in order to inform its interventions. The national movement will leverage off of existing youth groups and structures in order to improve its reach. A national #BeFree Camp will also be organised for learners from all 14 regions. ONE is committed to a society where young people will be free from HIV and all other social ills which hold them back from reaching their potential.

Early Childhood Development: #EarlyMomentsMatter

unicef  for every child





Pictured: Madame Monica Geingos interacts with TIP learners and the launch of the Stay in School Initiative

TIP LEARNERS SHINE

By Helena Kuzee

Following the release of the First Term school results for 2017, Chante Moses, a 13-year-old learner at the Windhoek High School was named one of the top 10 performers at the school

Earlier this year twenty-five learners from all fourteen regions were selected to be part of One Economy Foundation's Talented Individual Programme (TIP). Originally from Outjo, Chante grew up with her grandparents and is one of five children.

Chante's favourite subject is Geography and she dreams of one day becoming a meteorologist or a marine biologist. The ambition she displays is a common trait among the 25 learners who have been placed at the Windhoek Gynnasium Private School, Windhoek High School and the St Boniface College in Sambyu, near Rundu. The Learners have all consistently performed well in grades 5 to 7 but their talent was at risk of falling through the cracks of inequality.

The decision by the ONE Economy Foundation (ONE) to intervene is rooted in its strong belief that talent is evenly spread, but opportunity is not. Namibia has a high school dropout attrition rate and the path from Grade 8 – 12 is a minefield, littered with explosive issues which prevent many children from matriculating.

TIP intends to help the learners navigate these rough seas through the support

of a multidisciplinary internal support team as well as an external support team of psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists and life coaches/mentors.

We are grateful for the full support of the parents of the TIP learners and with the full support and participation of the parents/guardians and teachers, ONE seeks to provide a nurturing and supportive environment for the learners to realize their full potential.

“Educational outcomes are compromised by social realities.”

This makes TIP the most intensive programme of ONE as our focus transcends the mere payment of school fees.

ONE has committed to providing an all encompassing life experience to the successful learners from grade 8 to 12 and will continue actively raising funds to meet their academic and psycho-social needs. In the long run, we envisage the employment of a full time administrator, the programme has not been easy but it is very rewarding and with the support of our volunteers we are encouraged to continue changing the lives of our children.

UNAIDS APPOINTS MONICA GEINGOS AS SPECIAL ADVOCATE



Pictured: Mr Michel Sidibe hands over a certificate of appointment to Madame Monica Geingos

New York/ Geneva- The Executive Director of UNAIDS, Michel Sidibé, has appointed the First Lady of Namibia, Monica Geingos, as UNAIDS Special Advocate for Young Women and Adolescent Girls.

She will champion the newly launched Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free agenda. Mr Sidibé met with the First Lady on the sidelines of the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, United States of America. Madame Geingos will use her position as a UNAIDS Special Advocate to improve the health of adolescent girls and young women by championing the Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free, an agenda to put the world on a Super-Fast-Track to end AIDS among children, adolescents and young women by 2020.

“I am delighted that Madame Geingos has accepted this position. She will be using her platform to find partners and solutions to some of the difficult

health issues facing young women and adolescent girls today, including HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health, as well as access to education,” said Mr Sidibé. “Young women and adolescent girls around the world have a new champion and we look forward to supporting her work.”

Madame Geingos has pledged to use pragmatic innovative approaches towards issues affecting young people. “Young Women and adolescent girls face the conflicting realities of a world that is increasingly recognising gender equality while living in societies that continue to deny them the attainment of this shared right. While I am excited about the encouraging signs to rid the world of its patriarchal cloak, the risks faced by our young women and adolescent girls remain disproportionately and unacceptably high. It is an honour to team up with UNAIDS to work towards a generation that starts free and stays free from AIDS,” said Madame Geingos.

FINDING NEW WAYS TO USE AN OLD SKILL

By Uajorokisa Akwenye

The closure of the Ramatex factory was a life-changing moment for many of the textile company's employees.

Ms Inga Taatsu Boye came from humble beginnings. Having grown up in a family of small business owners, Inga was bound to forge her own path in the entrepreneurial space. Inga used to work for Ramatex as a seamstress where she developed her skill. In 2008, Ramatex closed its doors and the 1700 employees were left unemployed. Instead of giving up, Inga decided to take her skill and turn it into a business.

Despite receiving criticism from her family, she bought herself a sewing machine and started Taatsu Fashions CC, a small tailoring business located in Havana in Windhoek. With the little income earned from selling garments, Inga managed to buy additional equipment to expand her product offering.

Taatsu Fashions sells traditional Namibian clothing for both males and females, young and old. Inga has responded to another need within her community by selling ready made school uniforms to low-income earners. It is not limited by its location, ever since its inception, Inga has been travelling to trade fairs country-wide to where she regularly operates a stall.

Since 2008 Taatsu Fashion's has grown

into more than just a design company. In addition to selling clothing, Taatsu Fashions also provides sewing training to young women and has employed two assistants. The growth of Inga's business is hampered by her inability to access a business loan from a commercial bank or private equity firm. With access to funding Inga hopes to procure additional sewing equipment and stock to increase her customer base, products, and training capacity to ensure the steady growth of her business.

“Inga's dream is bigger than her current capacity.”

Inga's determination and perseverance are one of the many reasons why she is a perfect candidate for the One Economy Foundation's Collateral Free Lending programme. Taatsu Fashions will receive a collateral free loan of N\$20,000.00 to help boost her business.

Inga's dream is bigger than her current capacity. She is an example of your typical entrepreneur in the second economy who has dreams but is typically locked out by the financial sector., ONE's Collateral Free Loan Product seeks to fill this gap by supporting people like Inga who are unable to bridge the distance between access to finance and their entrepreneurial dreams.



Pictured: Ms Inga Taatsu Boye



Pictured: Children at the Masida ECD Centre in the Linyanti Constituency

EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT A COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

By Helena Kuzee

Early Childhood Development (ECD) remains a critical foundation for the future of Namibian Children. The One Economy Foundation, recently commissioned the University of Namibia Multidisciplinary Research Center to undertake a study which comprehensively analysed the factors affecting the growth and development of children between the ages of 0 and 8 years in terms of their health and hygiene, mental, physical, emotional and socio-economic environments at home and within their communities.

The study was launched at the Masida ECD Centre in the Linyanti Constituency of the Zambezi Region on 5 June 2017 and is titled “Needs Assessment of under resourced and vulnerable Early Childhood Development Centres in Namibia”. The study surveys 32 vulnerable ECD centres across 8 regions of Namibia, namely, Hardap, Kavango West, Kavango East, Kunene, Ohangwena, Omusati, Otjozondjupa, and Zambezi. It is a collaborative effort between UNICEF the Office of First Lady Monica Geingos and other key stakeholders. The study gives a comprehensive indication that both human and financial constraints are limiting the provision of the essential services for children before they enter formal education. Despite these limitations, ECD centres serve as places where children are able to learn, develop, and receive an introduction to the education system.

“As a matter of principle, the One Economy Foundation insists that all its

interventions are targeted and evidence based. The foundations have been laid for ECD in Namibia, however, as we strive towards our collective goal of providing integrated early childhood development services, it is critical that we understand the existing conditions at ECD Centres across the country” said Madame Monica Geingos, First Lady of the Republic of Namibia.

According to the findings of the assessment, while large gaps exist at all facilities assessed during the survey, the passion revealed by the ECD caregivers displays their commitment to supporting the cognitive and social development of children. The Ministries of Health and Social Services, Gender Equality and Child Welfare, and Education Arts and Culture need to work together to forge smart partnerships which meet the health, sanitation, nutritional, physical, socio-emotional and cognitive needs of Namibian children.

Promoting access to preschool services in rural areas, prioritizing home-based early-childhood development and ensuring safe and conducive environments for children, are prerequisites for a child's lifelong health, productivity, education and better job prospects. Communities should be sensitised to the needs of the ECD Centres and be encouraged to help improve their facilities and services. Community Members also need to play a bigger role in supporting the development of young children as Early Childhood Development is a collective responsibility.

OUR BOARD



Mr Festus Mukungu
Grade 10

Festus was unable to complete his high school due to financial circumstances. He worked as a security guard at a Parastatal and after nine years, was made redundant. In his own words, he refused to sit at home and feel sorry for himself, so he approached a local supermarket in Windhoek and offered his security services to guard cars and direct shoppers to available parking spots.

Festus has an incisive and inquisitive mind and is testament to the many Namibians who have high levels of intelligence and talent but were unable to access the necessary educational foundation to fully harness their intellectual capabilities. Festus provides meaningful and insightful contributions to the Board and is dedicated to ensuring that no talented Namibian falls through the poverty crack.



Mrs Kaunapaua Ndilula, Masters of Development Finance (Massachusetts), MBA (University of Stellenbosch)

Kauna is a Development Finance Specialist whose experience has largely been in the development of the SME Sector, and the institutional development and delivery of financial products, particularly related to access to credit for SME owners. Kauna has played an active role in policy formulation for SME focused finance programs in both the commercial and development finance arena. Kauna is the founding shareholder and Principal in Business Financial Solutions, which provides access to finance for SME's and corporates. As a Development Economist, Kauna's passion is channeling her experience into the upliftment and economic empowerment of Namibians. She serves on various Boards such as the Namibian Stock Exchange, Namdeb Holdings, BIPA and Business Financial Solutions and associated entities like the Namibia Procurement Fund.



Mavis Elias
Student

Mavis Elias is a final year Civil Engineering student at the Namibian University of Science and Technology (NUST).

Mavis was awarded Vivid Philanthropist of the year in year 2015 and represented the country in Washington DC to do research on the fight against Gender Based Violence.

With her passion for woman empowerment, her community-minded life view as well as her insights as young Namibian, Mavis is a reflection of the energy, passion and focus that characterizes the One Economy Foundation. Mavis hopes to use her position as Director ONE to transform as many lives as possible.



Dawie Fourie
B. Acc (cum laude) CA (Nam)

Dawie was the Managing Partner of PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) Namibia for many years and played an instrumental role in gaining massive market share for PWC. Under his leadership, the staff complement at PWC

increased from 16 to 216. Dawie retired from PWC at the age of 42 to establishment the African Leadership Institute and is the owner of Rock Lodge. Dawie has a passion for leadership and the Namibian Dream. He has written a book called "Who is stealing my joy" and is the presenter of various leadership and family seminars. He also mentors many young, upcoming Namibian professionals.



Marcelina !Gaoses
Bsc. Business Administration (University of Hayward California); MBA Law (University of Wales); National Higher Certificate in Public Administration; Diploma in Life Insurance (UNISA)

Marcelina is a Financial Sector Expert with extensive local and international experience. She is a Director and Senior Partner of Musa Capital Namibia and Managing Partner of Global Mandate Consulting Namibia while serving on several public and private sector boards. Marcelina is passionate about finding solutions to reduce wealth inequality and feels it is important that the economic imbalances in Africa are urgently addressed at all levels. Her involvement at One Economy Foundation is her way of doing her little bit to work towards One Namibia, One Economy.



Fredericka Eichas, high potential, intelligent, hard working, entrepreneurial Namibian with no primary or secondary education

Frederika works as a full time domestic worker and in order to make ends meet, runs a small catering business. She is personification of a talented Namibian who fell through the poverty crack. Frederika's Board presence not only raises her knowledge base but also enriches the One Economy Board with practical explanations of the realities faced by low-income earners who have entrepreneurial and self-advancement ambitions. Despite her challenges, Frederika, together with the rest of the Board, has undertaken Board training and this process has ensured equality of voice and influence for all Board members.



ECONOMY

ONE NAMIBIA. ONE ECONOMY

ON THE MOVE

“Redressing inequality takes powerful collective effort and our intention is to play a small but effective role in providing a bridge of opportunity between the first and second economy. We are privileged to move through the length and breadth of Namibia and to engage stakeholders across the world on the issues that move our hearts and in turn help us change lives.”



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Pictured: Madame Monica Geingos with UNAIDS Executive Director Mr Michel Sidibe

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Staff Reporter

The role of a First Lady is easily misconstrued and rarely contextualized. Often defined more by an individual than cast in stone, the role is often personalised by an incumbent. First Ladies the world over have made the role their own, often being directed by their passions with limitations stemming from the societies they live.

Recently, the Organization of African First Ladies against HIV and AIDS (OAFLA) General Assembly has brought to the fore a debate on whether the title First Lady remains relevant, and whether an organization like OAFLA should bear the title “First Lady” in its name.

While the Offices of First Ladies are not funded, there is always an expectation that they carry out work which usually focuses on topical socio economic issues within their country. The work of the First Lady is usually carried out through a foundation which espouses the passions of that First Lady. In the case of Namibia, First Lady Monica Geingos in 2016 established the One Economy Foundation (ONE) which focuses its energy on reducing inequality and redressing structurally entrenched poverty through interventions under the following pillars: Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development, Education, Gender Based Violence and Health.

As undefined as the role of a First Lady is, it is one that will continue to adapt to global realities. First Ladies have social capital and according to Monica Geingos, “as with any kind of capital, social capital must be spent”. ONE intentionally uses an evidence based approach to inform its interventions. The approach used by Madame Geingos includes regular interactions with young people on social media platforms.

To gain better insights into her work, follow her on Twitter using the handles @INamibia and @FLON_Namibia and Facebook: Monica Geingos, the First Lady of Namibia or One Economy Foundation.

THE SPIRIT OF VOLUNTEERISM

By Staff Reporter

The One Economy Foundation (ONE) has opened a platform for volunteers to take part in its strategic project implementation.

The Foundation seeks the voluntary assistance and expertise of individuals in various fields who seek to share their experience and expertise knowledge or simply want to lend a hand. Currently, a total number of 141 volunteers have signed up and pledged to work with ONE.

The spirit of volunteerism has assisted ONE in the implementation of its core programmes under each its five pillars. The skills and expertise offered by the volunteers supports two of our core beliefs. Firstly that each one of us have a responsibility to remove someone from poverty. Secondly that each should give as is within their means.

ONE is grateful to our volunteers who dedicate their time, skills and knowledge without expecting financial



Pictured: #BeFree volunteers

reward. We remain cognizant of our capacity constraints but we draw our inspiration from every individual or corporate who shares our ideals and believes we can bridge the gap between the first and second economy.

The volunteer programme is open to everyone. If this is of interest to you, please establish contact with our office to complete your Volunteer Application Form. For more information contact our office at 061 270 7806 or email to admin@1economy.org

SMART PARTNERSHIPS



Pictured: First Lady Monica Geingos, Former First Lady Penhupifo Pohamba and Line Ministers witness the signing of MOU between The Office of the First Lady and the Namibia Correctional Service

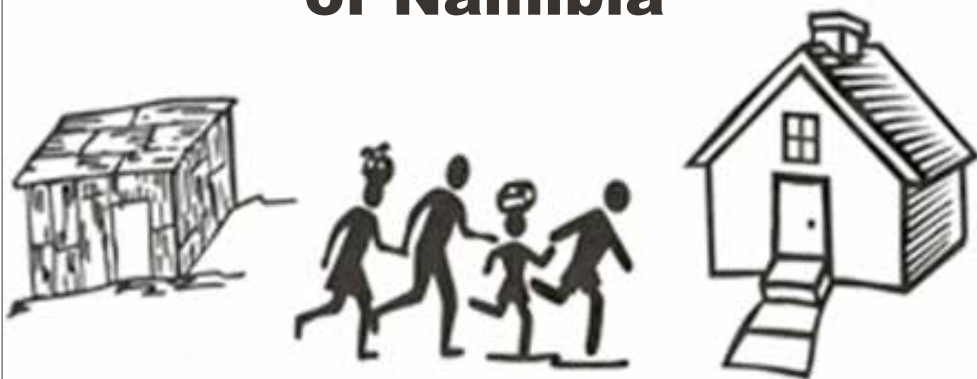
The ONE Economy Foundation (ONE) very quickly learnt that the best the most genuine way to complement the work of existing organisations is by forging smart partnership. Since our inception we have managed to gather more than 80 agencies and disciplines in scoping meetings and mapping workshops to strengthen the coordination of our mutual efforts and create awareness about what other stakeholders are doing and maximise synergies and outcomes.

Smart partnerships were formed with Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, Ministry of Health and Social Services, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Safety and Security (including Namibia Correctional Service and the Namibian Police), Office of the Judiciary, City of Windhoek, Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia, The Namibia Women Lawyers Association (NWLA); TONATA People Living with HIV Network; Monica Gender Violence Solutions, ESDA/Friendly Haven Shelter, Right 4 Respect, Fatherhood Foundation and Development Partners such as UNFPA, UNAIDS and UNICEF.

The creation of the #BeFree Movement and the constitution of the First Lady's Advisory Council have guided us significantly in obtaining a sense of what happens at grassroots.

These partnerships help ONE to reach a wider audience and facilitate the multi-disciplinary approach needed to effectively implementing all our pillars.

Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia



FATHERHOOD
FOUNDATION



ONE ECONOMY FOUNDATION BRINGS HOPE THROUGH COLLATERAL FREE LOANS

By Uajorokisa Akwenye

Increasingly more micro entrepreneurs find themselves in a paradox where on the one hand they are encouraged to start new businesses, and on the other hand they are faced with the obstacle called “lack of capital”. Taking into consideration Namibia’s history of institutionalised segregation, a number of Namibians remain structurally disadvantaged and trapped in a poverty cycle which limits their ability to acquire collateral. Any business they dream of starting is disadvantaged. The micro and macro business landscape presents opportunities to scale up existing businesses, create meaningful employment and structurally change the lives of second economy participants. The One Economy Foundation (ONE) has tailored a financial product that is comprehensive and a tangible pillar of a support to an entrepreneur through the dynamic challenges that they face, namely the Collateral Free Lending Programme (CFL).

Being an association not for gain, we are uniquely positioned to provide collateral free business loans, as commercial funding entities are unlikely to provide the same assistance due to high credit risk and low margins. It is our belief that we stand a higher chance of success as we have no profit to gain and will not run the risk of burdening low income earners with high hidden costs of lending. ONE’s Collateral Free Lending Programme is a practical solution to problems faced by entrepreneurs. We do not require any form of security/collateral or asset and/or mortality insurance cover. The programme boasts no administrative costs to ensure

maximum capital flow to the programme, low interest with a repayment incentive attached to the interest to promote savings and successful repayment of the loan. Our application process is simple, easy to understand and provides a quick turn-around after submission. Our loans are character loans and therefore, we have done away with the age-old requirement of a detailed business plan and instead compile a business profile together with the entrepreneur through a series of short and simple questions. We have moulded our programme around the entrepreneur, taking into consideration their environment and challenges. We have also simplified the process for the entrepreneur, as our approach largely focuses on the analogy of “betting more on the jockey than the horse.”

The simple and quick process is designed with the typical micro entrepreneur in mind. For example the “Kapana” vendor, who runs a successful kapana selling business but is limited by lack of cash flow to acquire additional stock to upscale their business. The income he/she receives daily is used to purchase just enough stock for the next day’s sale and the extra is used to meet the bare minimum to sustain their livelihoods. This is a typical challenge faced by kapana vendors, due to this challenge and their low-income earner status they would never qualify for business funding from a traditional commercial bank, and therefore, lack an opportunity to grow their business. We have been touched by the stories of women have succeeded to put their children through university with the earnings from their businesses and believe that through our intervention we are able to change conventional financing models.

Our micro loan model is designed to assist members of independent savings groups such as the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia, a group savings scheme with the experience of understanding low income earners. The

members of these community-driven savings schemes are typically second economy participants. Our belief is that through the assistance of our loans we are able to increase the revenue and sustainability of their micro enterprises, allowing them to successfully pay off their low-cost housing loans. The socio-economic effect cuts across the provision of decent shelter, the restoration of dignity and a sustainable increase in household income. Our decision to work with independent savings groups also speaks to our philosophy of fostering innovative smart partnerships.

Due to lack of access to business funding many micro and macro entrepreneurs are forced to have two jobs, they typically have a full-time job in addition to running a business which they typically operate from home. We believe that by capacitating their business, we provide a solution to this problem, by capacitating the entrepreneur with funding and business development skills, we allow him/her to successfully grow their business to a level where they can leave their full time job and free that space for another individual in the employment pool and at the same time create new employment for others within their business.

We intend to act with the heart of a non-profit and the operational efficiency of a target driven business. We believe that this Collateral Free Lending programme is a real opportunity to meaningfully change the economic landscape in Namibia.

A CHAT WITH THE CEO

The One Economy Foundation is barely a year old and already the achievements are more than this interview has space for. We had the opportunity to catch up with Mrs Uajorokisa Akwenye(UA), Chief Executive Officer to hear more about the Foundation.

1. What is the difference between the One Economy Foundation and the Office of the First Lady?

UA: The One Economy Foundation operates under the auspices of the Office of the First Lady. The Office of the First Lady does not receive a budget from the State to implement its project. The Office is however required to implement programmes and has a staff complement to support the First Lady in this endeavor. The Foundation was established to act as the fundraising arm of the Office of the First Lady and ensure the implementation and sustainability of the programmes she commits to.

2. We have now set the record straight about the relationship between ONE and OFL. What are your core objectives?

UA: ONE is registered as a Section 21 Company in terms of the Namibian Companies Act. Due to our community work, we are also registered as a Social Welfare Organisation (WO468). ONE concerns itself with the dual economy in Namibia, where one economy is prosperous and urban, with ready access to a developed economic, physical and technological infrastructure. The second economy is informal, township or rural and lacks access to the networks, technology and capital required to succeed in the first economy. The majority of Namibians operate in the second economy or on the peripheries of the first economy. Our intention is to shape our interventions in a manner where we act as a bridge for second economy participants to access the first economy through structured and targeted interventions.

3. Well, one of the things I noticed is that your team consists of only four people (yourself included). Can it be that a team this small has achieved so much?

Capacity continues to be one of the biggest constraints, however, we have been humbled by the support we have received from our volunteers and partners/stakeholders. Through their assistance we have been able to extend our reach and ensure maximum impact.

4. You mentioned structured and targeted interventions, can you tell us more about these interventions and what formula do you use to determine the initiatives?

UA: Our targeted interventions are more commonly known as our programmes and/or activities. Our programmes are driven by our five themes, which we refer to as pillars. Our five pillars include: Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development, Education, Gender-Based Violence, Health and Institutional and Strategic Support. All our programmes are evidence based and seek to answer one simple question, "Had it not been for our intervention, would the individual or group have had access to opportunity?" If the answer is no, then we intervene.



Pictured: Mrs Uajorokisa Akwenye

5. What makes ONE more than a non-profit?

UA: We believe that since our launch in 2016, we have made a significant impact in the thinking around sustainable measures to remove those stuck in the vicious cycle of poverty which is increasingly becoming generational. ONE is governed by an independent Board of non-executive Directors which bears overall responsibility for providing strategic direction and exercising fiduciary duties. ONE prides itself in its ability to optimize utilization of resources to ensure value for money in its interventions. By maintaining low administrative costs, ONE ensures that 97% of funds received are channeled directly towards program implementation. We have also established a robust governance framework.

Board diversity is personified in the skills, demographic and experience mix of the Directors as well as by their respective participation in the formal and informal economies. Director backgrounds include financial services experts, youth, an office cleaner who aspires to be an entrepreneur and a breadwinner whose full time occupation is guarding cars at a local supermarket. At the One Economy Foundation, we are committed to accountability, efficiency and transparency. We pledge to be good stewards of the funds entrusted to us by our generous donors.

6. So ONE has the team, it has the support, it has the programmes....it sounds like you have little if any challenges?

UA: We have many challenges but fortunately our office is powered by optimism. Our capacity is always stretched, we are constantly in need of fundraising but we are so caught up in trying to live our passion and make everything work that we are not held back by our challenges. We currently rely heavily on donor funding to ensure the implementation of our programmes. We, therefore, are careful to manage our finances in a manner that ensures the sustainability and effective implementation of our programmes and continue to actively seek funding.

7. Thank you very much for allowing our readers the opportunity to learn more about ONE and most importantly for sharing your dream of one economy with us. Do you have any last words?

UA: Thank you for the opportunity. We believe that the story of the ONE will easily speak for itself. We believe in the impact of interventions and enjoying sharing our heart when it comes to finding innovative ways of addressing poverty. We have a unique position in that we operate with the heart of a non-profit and the efficiency of a corporate. In addition to the financial and capacity constraints, we also have unexpected constraints like having to accept that occasionally we must deal with political noise which is somewhat awkward for us as we do not regard ourselves as political. Despite being an apolitical organization we are not naïve to the environment we operate in and will remain committed to our philosophy of ONE Namibia, One Economy.

R4R
Right For Respect

Vision
Our vision is to promote equality through educating young children and the greater community.

Mission
Our mission is to reduce gender based violence through humanizing the community at large, and particularly young children and youth regarding fundamental morals and values, and supporting equal respect between men and women.

Core Values
Respect
Equality
Justice
Teamwork
Integrity

[@right4respect](https://www.facebook.com/right4respect)
info@right4respect.com



Pictured: Madame Monica Geingos speaks to young people at the #BeFree launch in the Omaheke Region

#BEFREE, THE FOUNDATION OF MY NEW LIFE

A testimony by @BeFreeAnonymous

I first heard of the #BeFree movement at its launch in a nightclub. I honestly did not know exactly what it was about, until I took the time to read up on it when Madame Monica Geingos was appointed as the UNAIDS Special Advocate for Young Women and Adolescent Girls. Since the one thing girls fear is falling pregnant. I thought to myself, here comes another AIDS campaign that will not really make a difference besides create awareness. Until 1 December 2016, World Aids day, I was diagnosed with HIV, I had refused counselling and went home and lived like nothing happened.

Till March 2017, I couldn't fight my personal demon alone, I decided to seek help. As a university student and all the stigma surrounding HIV in my community I preferred being anonymous while seeking help, as I was uncomfortable about disclosing my status and I didn't know how to access medication privately nor did I know whom to talk to about my situation.

I then came across the #BeFree Movement again when it launched its Stay in School campaign. That is when

I knew that it's the only relevant campaign that would understand me and my problem. The advocate herself, Madame Geingos, has declared herself a mother to many. I then knew right away that I needed to talk to her. Today the #BeFree movement has respected my decision not to disclose my identity but also it has supported me into taking the first step which was getting onto treatment.

Besides getting onto treatment, the #BeFree campaign supports me emotionally as I am free to drop an email and express myself, also they are a text away in case of any emergency. The movement has assigned me to a doctor who is phenomenal at what she does in HIV management and woman healthcare.

#BeFree is my sanctuary where my heart becomes free and my shame is undone, it is the foundation of my new life. To be free and stay free in my new world means to be free to express my story when I feel comfortable to do so and to aim and keep my viral load undetectable as well as to stay free of AIDS. The movement is young, hip

and cool and is for the young, it is made for us adolescent girls and it has made an impact in other girls' lives too. More can be done in terms of sharing vital information as my initial thoughts on HIV were always what we see on TV, looking back at my high school days it's quite scary how I never really learnt much and feared teenage pregnancies more than contracting HIV.

The movement also made me realise that being HIV positive does not mean that my problem is bigger than somebody else's, it has reminded me that we all make mistakes, but it is up to us to learn and move on. The one thing that the advocate has said to me is that being HIV positive is not an excuse to expect less of myself or do less with my life. With that said I will continue to live positively and stay AIDS free.

Read more about Anonymous' story through her Facebook page - Anonymous #BeFree



MISSION STATEMENT

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is the lead UN agency delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.



**START FREE
STAY FREE
AIDS FREE**

#BeFree

START FREE STAY FREE AIDS FREE ECONOMY ONE NAMIBIA ONE ECONOMY START FREE STAY FREE AIDS FREE ECONOMY ONE NAMIBIA ONE ECONOMY START FREE STAY FREE AIDS FREE

CLASSIFIED ADS- HOW CAN WE HELP

Clothing

Do you have second hand clothing for teenagers between the ages of 13-18. We are always looking for donations for the learners in the Talented individual programme and would appreciate your support.

Please email admin@leconomy.org for enquiries and assistance or call 061 270 7806.

Educational material

Our learners love reading and would appreciate the donations appropriate for teenagers. If you have novels and books on subjects covered in the Namibian high school syllabus please donate them to us.

Please contribute to bridging the gap of learning opportunities amongst our Namibian youth. Please email admin@leconomy.org or call 061 270 7806.

Early Childhood Development

Early Childhood Development centers across the country are not adequately stocked with comfortable furniture and learning materials. Please let us know if this is an area you would like to support us in.

Please email admin@leconomy.org or call 061 270 7806

Mentorship

Are you willing to support the growth and development of another Namibian through mentorship?

Please contact our office at 061 2707806 or email admin@leconomy.org for more information.

Computers & Stationery

Do you have an old computer which you would like to donate to a resource center of the Monica Geingos Junior Secondary School?

Please email admin@leconomy.org or call 061 270 7806.



Pictured: Madame Monica Geingos with the 22 TIP learners from the Windhoek Gymnasium and Windhoek High School