



# The Catherine Bullen Foundation

*Making a difference in rural Namibia*

## NEWSLETTER

No: 44

Summer 2021

Welcome to our Summer newsletter, as with many sub-Saharan countries, Namibia remains on the Red List despite lobbying by tourist industry representatives and other involved organisations.

From a high of 1,944 cases on 28 June, this has come down to 51 cases on 25 August, with just three deaths, which is a huge improvement and all credit to the Government for the measures that were introduced including locking down the regions for the whole of July.

With regards to the vaccination programme, Reuters reported on 16 July, that Namibia, whose COVID-19 inoculation programme was halted by a lack of vaccines, received a boost with the arrival of 250,000 Sinopharm doses bought from China. Namibia had temporarily suspended delivering jabs at major vaccination centres across the country after supplies ran low.

Namibia is classified as an upper-middle-income country\* and had to pay to participate in the global vaccine distribution scheme COVAX. But it has only received 67,200 doses out of 108,000 allocated by the facility. It has also received donations of 100,000 Sinopharm doses from China and 30,000 AstraZeneca (AZN.L) doses from India.

The south west African country expects delivery of a further 40,800 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine from the Covax facility and 333,333 doses of Johnson & Johnson (JNJ.N) procured from the African Union's vaccine procurement programme.

Total vaccinations, as at 16 August, 187,892 (7.5% of the population) had received their first dose and 80,664 (3.2%) had received their second dose, this is out of qualifying population of 2,128,471. The limiting factor for the vaccination programme is the supply of vaccines which has been slow with the latest batch of 75,000 doses of the AstraZeneca arriving from the Netherlands on 7 August. Coupled with this, is a hesitancy to be vaccinated due to the speed it has been introduced and suspicions that it is a different vaccine to the one being used in western countries. There is also a lot of miss-information on social media.

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\*Statistically, Namibia is one of just nine countries in Africa categorized by the World Bank as upper middle income. However, this is not the case on the ground. Poverty in Namibia, is still prevalent, and the country is rife with extreme wealth imbalances. Namibia has a poverty rate of 17.4% (2019) and an unemployment rate of 20.27% (2019). Furthermore, the country's status as upper middle income makes its poor ineligible for aid from the UNDP and other development groups. Hence it is receiving very little donated vaccines and it is having to purchase them from the West, China and the USA to secure adequate supplies.

## Plans for Covid-19 isolation beds at Otjimanangombe Primary Healthcare Clinic

In the middle of July, the clinic was visited by Epukiro Constituency councillors with a view to putting twelve isolation beds in the clinic for patients suffering with Covid-19. With the idea that if their situation worsened they would be transferred to Gobabis Hospital. The councillors have done this under their own initiative and have launched an appeal for funds and equipment as the Ministry of Health do not have the finance to support this.

During their visit they identified a number of maintenance issues mainly involving the lack of working toilets and no hot water which we were aware of and have been trying for sometime to get rectified by the Ministry of Works. This led to us liaising with the councillors and we asked a colleague, Mr Bob Puzey, an Englishman living in the village, who was a plumber by trade to look at the issues. He reported back to us on the problems he encountered which we passed back to the councillors. The result was that on Monday 9 August, a team from the Ministry of Works arrived to make repairs. There is still work to do and they are returning soon.

The councillors have managed to acquire some equipment including the beds and we wait to see how this progresses. Below is their appeal notice which was placed on social media.



**EPUKIRO COVID-19 MITIGATING INITIATIVE**

Epukiro Constituency Disaster Risk Management Committee has established a COVID-19 mitigating initiative to control the spread of COVID-19 in the constituency and prevent loss of lives due to COVID-19.

We are, therefore, calling on the business community, farmers, villages, oviuondo, churches, traditional authorities and individuals to support the Epukiro COVID-19 Mitigating Initiative with funding or in kind contributions.

**Bank:** Standard Bank  
**Account Name:** Epukiro Constituency Development Trust  
**Account No.:** 60002230274  
**Account Type:** Cheque  
**Branch:** Ausspannplatz

**ENQUIRIES:** Hon. Packy Pakarae 081 141 4322  
Ms Lady Tjatindi 081 200 3395  
Mr Agim Hange 081 147 6969

*We will greatly appreciate your assistance in the fight against COVID 19.*

 Omaheke Regional Council  
Epukiro Constituency Office

[omahekerc.gov.na](http://omahekerc.gov.na)

## Low Covid recovery rate dampens mood in Omaheke

• CHARLES TJATINDI

OMAHEKE has experienced a low Covid-19 recovery rate, with the region consistently remaining at the bottom of the recovery table. This is despite a relative drop in new infections in the region.

Statistics from the Ministry of Health and Social Services confirm that the region is yet to attain desirable recovery rates compared to other regions.

Over the first 10 days of August, the country has experienced 8 945 recoveries, with Omaheke only contributing 40 recoveries to the figure. On some days, the region failed to register any new recoveries of Covid-19 patients, while on many other occasions such recovery figures were low.

The highest recovery figure for Omaheke over the first 10 days of August was 16 patients, which was recorded on 2 August.

This is a stark contrast to other regions that had relatively better recovery figures.

For instance, the Khomas region registered 1 750 recoveries out of 2 983 total recoveries on 10 August. Omaheke did not register a single recovery on the day. A day earlier, the Khomas region also topped the list of recoveries with 2 127 – the highest from a single region over the period under review. Omaheke had only one recovery case on the day.

Also, on 4 August, Otjozondjupa region had 121 recoveries out of 323 recoveries on the day, with Omaheke only registering six recovery cases.

On new infections, the region fared much better. While a total 2 318 new infections were registered during the period under review, only 35 cases were from the Omaheke region.

The drop in new infections has been en-



File photo

**ONE STEP BACK ...** Despite a relative drop in new infections in the region, Omaheke's recovery rate remains low.

couraging for Omaheke, given the relative high fatalities experienced in the region last month.

The region registered five deaths between 1 and 10 August, a huge drop from an average of 5-7 deaths registered per day last month at the height of the Covid-19 4th wave.

Omaheke regional governor Pijoo Nganate, who heads the regional Covid-19 response, says although the number of new infections has gone down, health protocols on Covid prevention should still be followed.

"We cannot afford to let our guard down. We need to keep pushing and practising all the Covid-19 prevention protocols that we know by now. The virus is still with us and if we relax, it will multiply," he said.

He expressed concern that residents are

seeking treatment for symptoms consistent with Covid-19 too late.

"I have been informed that residents do not seek medical help early enough for health practitioners to save their lives. We must change this trend, and adopt a proactive mentality. Let us not wait until it's too late to seek help," he said.

Gobabis deputy mayor Elwin Gariseb echoed Nganate's sentiments, adding that reliance on self-medication has been problematic for many in the region.

"We are being constantly informed of people opting to take their own concoctions and medicine to treat Covid-19-related symptoms and avoiding visiting health facilities. This is a problem and should be avoided," said Gariseb.

Recent article in the press commenting on the Covid-19 situation in the Omaheke region.

## St Mary's Senior School for Girls

As previously reported the pupils of St Mary's Senior School for Girls in Colchester decided that they would like to raise funds to buy the children of Good Hope Primary School in the village of Okovimburu in the Omaheke region of Namibia, each a school uniform. The final round of fundraising took place January resulting in £2,243 being raised. A total of £6,016 was then transferred to the Primary school to buy uniforms for 500 children. St Mary's have agreed to carry on raising money to provide socks and shoes for the children and we are very grateful for their continued support.

The school has also organised the following activity for the summer

### **School Community Summer Project**

Calling all parents, students, grandparents, aunts, uncles and family friends... we need your help! Over the Summer we are inviting you to take part in an exciting whole school community project for our school charity, the Catherine Bullen Foundation.

Upon our return in September, we are planning to run an Enrichment activity to create a range of patchwork blankets (knitted or crocheted) for children to use in the dormitories at [Good Hope Primary School and Hostel](#), [Eiseb Primary School hostel](#) & [Omuaturua Primary School Hostel](#) in Namibia. So, whether you're a seasoned veteran with the knitting needles or you're looking for a new hobby, we would love you to become involved in this school project.

Over the Summer, we are requesting your help in producing either knitted or crocheted squares (using a stitch/pattern of your choice) 15cm x 15cm (6"x6"), which some of our students will then join during an Enrichment activity from September.

If you or somebody you know would like to participate in this exciting community project, please could you use the link in the email. We are kindly asking to send in any completed squares into school office by *Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September*.

The Foundation thanks St Mary's Senior School for Girls for their continued support.

## ***The Foundation's Projects***

### **The multi-purpose hall – Omuaturua Primary School and Hostel, Otjimanangombe**

Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 situation, the meetings that were scheduled with the builder to progress this project were unable to take place especially with the whole region being in lockdown for the month of July. Now that this has been lifted, it is hoped that work can start again.

### **Borehole for Eiseb Primary School and Hostel**

It is planned that Roger and Linda should be back in Namibia at the end of December 2021, subject to it being moved off the Red list on to Amber. It has always been their intention to see the borehole being drilled which should take place in the following January if we can get there.

### **4x4 ambulance for Otjimanangombe Primary Healthcare Clinic**

We are still waiting for the Ministry of Health to confirm the funding to staff the ambulance. The following communication was received from the Regional Director of Health for the Omaheke Region.

'The Omaheke Regional Health Directorate has submitted its proposed staffing structure that includes a driver and an Emergency Care Practitioner (paramedic) for Otjimanangombe clinic, but so far the Public Service Commission has not approved the Ministry's proposed structure. Hence, the Regional Health Directorate cannot be able to budget before an approval is granted.'

The number one priority at the moment is fighting the Covid-19 pandemic which is delaying the decision. The British High Commissioner in Windhoek and the Namibian High Commissioner in London are lobbying on our behalf.

## ***The Catherine Bullen Primary Healthcare Clinic***

There have been a number of staff changes at the clinic, Sister in charge, nurse Emerita Amakutuwa has moved to a clinic in Oshakati and Staff Nurse Monika Nailonga has moved to Walvis Bay, both to be nearer their families. We welcome to the clinic a new Sister in charge, Nurse Kaarina and we wish her well in her new role.

## ***The Foundation donates blankets to the Afghan refugees***



Isabel Lockwood (centre) from Refugee Action – Colchester receiving the blankets

Unfortunately due to Covid-19, Roger and Linda have been unable to travel to Namibia to distribute knitted items to the San bushmen and their families because it is on the UK government's Red list. Their hearts were touched with the images of the Afghan refugees fleeing their country and it was decided to donate the blankets that they had in store on Mersea to Refugee Action in Colchester to distribute to the refugees arriving from Afghanistan. As it happens there was a TV crew from BBC Look East there to interview two Afghans and they took the opportunity to film us delivering the blankets which featured on the evening's news. All good publicity for the Foundation.

## ***Fundraising***

The easing of Covid-19 restrictions has meant that once again we have been able to carry out shop collections and it has been good to interact with the general public again and spread the word about the Foundation's work in Namibia. Due to the pandemic, people are now carrying less cash on them, so we now have a small Sumup credit card reader which has meant that we have been able to accept credit card donations and this has proved quite successful. Thanks to Pat, Mike, Eilish, Shirley and Sandra for their help.

So far we have carried out collections at the following shops:

West Mersea Co-op: £182.19.

West Mersea Tesco: £322.41

Halstead Co-op: £177.81

Manningtree Co-op: £426.03

Brightlingsea Co-op: £215.06



Collecting outside Manningtree Co-op

In addition to this we raised £62 at the Mersea Island Car Boot sale and our near neighbours, Terry and Shirley raised £75 from selling bits and pieces from their front garden. Also thank you to Karen Pryke who raised £25 from selling tomato plants.

The easing of restrictions came too late for those organising fetes and summer shows which all remained cancelled, so we have had nowhere to go with our china smashing stall.

## ***Virgin Virtual London Marathon 2021***

As announced in our previous newsletter, we have secured three places in the Virgin Virtual London Marathon 2021 on 3 October, where runners will run a marathon course of their own choice. We have two runners from the Mersea Island Park Run, Nigel Eden and Hayley-Jane Gladwell and Wendy Hobbs from Colchester. To support Wendy go to <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/wendyhobbs> and Hayley go to <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/hayley-gladwell-SAVMLMBONDS333-2020-208675>

## ***Foundation Items for sale***



We have the full range of this unique San Jewellery for sale and can be found on our website at [www.namibia-aid.org.uk](http://www.namibia-aid.org.uk), or call us on 01206 383368. Please note that the single string bracelets are out of stock.

## ***Forthcoming Events***

We have the following events scheduled:

*Saturday 28 August 2021*

Shop collection – Woodbridge Co-op

*Sunday 29 August 2021*

Yard sale at 15 Colchester Rd, part of the round the island yard sale event

*Saturday 4 September 2021*

Shop collection – Stanway Co-op

*Saturday 11 September 2021*

Shop collection – Felixstowe Co-op

## *Events continued*

*Saturday 4 December 2021*

Shop collection – West Mersea Co-op

*Saturday 18 December 2021*

Shop collection – West Mersea Tesco

## ***Donations***

In common with other charities, the Catherine Bullen Foundation to restrict its fundraising activities during the period of Government Covid19 restrictions. Although these have now eased, many events that we would have attended or organised, remain cancelled

It would be very much appreciated, if you feel you could support us with a donation for our projects in Namibia. As we are a UK charity working overseas we are not eligible for any British Government grants.

It can be made on line on our website [www.namibia-aid.org.uk](http://www.namibia-aid.org.uk) through 'virginmoneygiving' or 'Paypal'.

By sending a cheque made out to the Foundation to 15 Colchester Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8RS

By bank transfer to:

Account Name: The Catherine Bullen Foundation Registered Number – 1110516

Sort Code: 20-22-67

Account No: 53717690

Thank you and stay safe.

## ***Regular giving***

Some of our donors have made a more formal arrangement by setting up a standing order to donate a regular monthly or yearly sum. For which we are extremely grateful. If you would like to support us in this way, please use the above banking details so that you can set it up.

## ***Presentations***

The Foundation is pleased to give presentations to groups and clubs on its work during the day or evenings.

## ***Make a difference!***

The Catherine Bullen Foundation is working with local communities to help build and nurture a new life for the people in rural Namibia. Because we are a small charity, our overheads are small and are personally covered by the trustees, so that every single penny donated to us goes to the intended project, with spending strictly monitored by the UK trustees and their ngo partner in Namibia. All visits to Namibia are self-financed and no charitable funds are used for this purpose. Please help us make a difference by making a donation, either on line at [www.namibia-aid.org.uk](http://www.namibia-aid.org.uk) or sending it to the address below.



## How to contact us

By Email: [info@namibia-aid.org.uk](mailto:info@namibia-aid.org.uk)

By Post: The Catherine Bullen Foundation  
Pear Tree Cottage  
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By phone: 01206 383368 (inside UK) or 0044 1206 383368 (from outside UK)

Mobile: 07771 630928  
07733 140748

## Donation/Gift Aid Declaration

(The Catherine Bullen Foundation – Registered Charity No. 1110516)

### Details of donor

Title..... Forename(s).....Surname.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Post Code.....

Signature.....

Date.....

I want the charity to treat

\*the enclosed donation of £..... as a Gift Aid donation

\*the donation(s) of £..... which I made on .... / .... / .... as (a) Gift Aid donation(s)

*\*delete as appropriate*

**You must pay an amount of Income and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the appropriate tax year.  
(currently 25p for each £1 you give).**