

# UNAM Cares' COVID-19 Disaster Risk Reduction through Oxygen Therapy and Ventilation Case Management Training for Nurses in Namibia

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Namibia, during the months of June - Sept 2021 went through a grip of the 3rd wave of COVID-19 infections. During this time a total number of 3 488 patients succumbed due to COVID-19 related symptoms in Namibia on 21 Sept 2021. The 3rd wave overwhelmed the country's health care system. It was during this time that UNAM Cares conducted a listening exercise on the needs of society through the Public Health Roadshows on COVID-19 risk reduction. During this time a need for training of nurses in oxygen therapy and ventilation case management was identified. UNAM Cares briefed the University of Namibia's (UNAM) Management (Professor Kenneth Matengu, Vice-Chancellor and Professor Judith Hall, Founder of the Phoenix Project of Cardiff University) on the need for training in oxygen therapy, who managed to obtain international aid to the value of N\$20 million from the Welsh and Africa Grant to strengthen the country's health care system. This poster presents UNAM Cares' COVID-19 Disaster Risk Reduction through oxygen therapy and ventilation case management trainings for nurses in Namibia conducted under the leadership of Dr Rachel Freeman and Lead Nursing Trainers: Mrs. Justa De Klerk and Mrs. Lilian S Masule from the University of Namibia.



Oxy Therapy & Case Management Training Team  
Ms. Just De Klerk, Middle: Mrs. Lilian Masule & Right: Dr Rachel Freeman

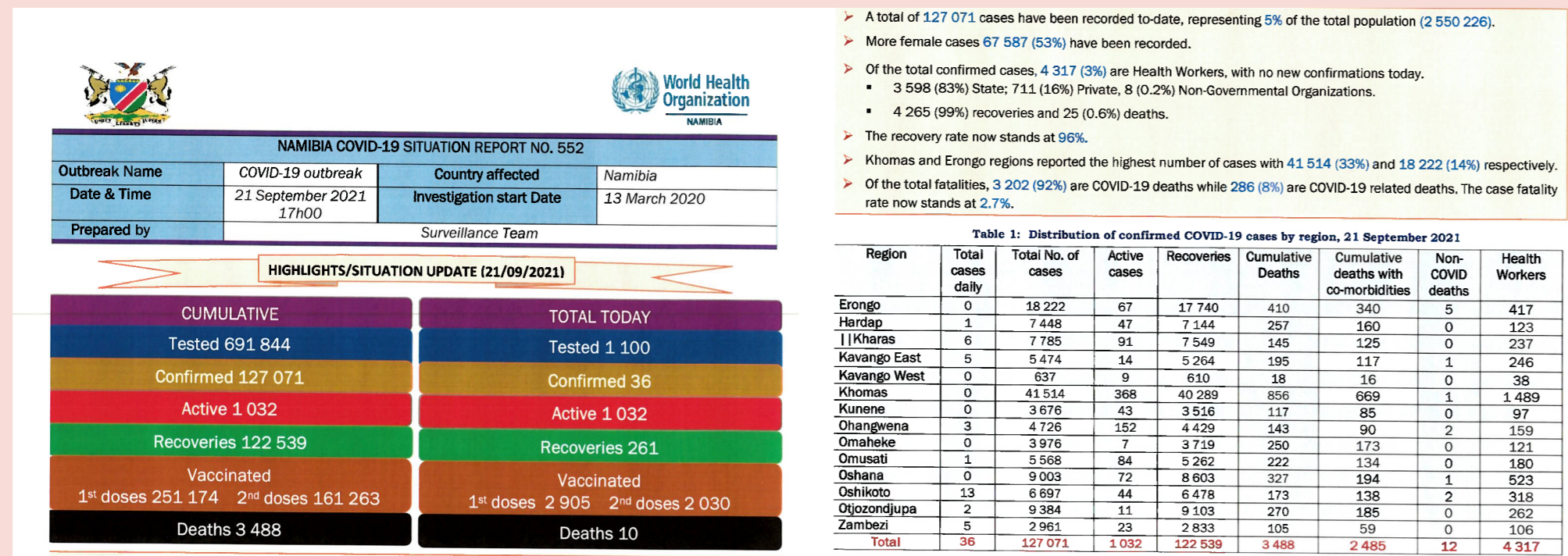


Figure 1: SITREP 21/09/21, MoHSS, 2021

## 2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Namibia during the months May-Sept 2021 experienced a total number of 3 488 patients, succumbed due to COVID-19 related symptoms on 21 Sept 2021. This is partially due a critical shortage of medical oxygen supply exposed by the 3rd wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 3rd surge exposed a critically inadequate health infrastructure in Namibia, in particular, a problem with oxygen supply, along with the means of delivering oxygen supply and a lack of personnel with the knowledge, skills and approaches necessary to deliver oxygen (once supplied) to save the lives of seriously ill patients.

## 3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

To capacity 180 nurses in the general wards with knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to competently administer oxygen therapy and ventilation case management of patients in a series of geographically devolved 'up-skilling' educational courses.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

Two-days Continuous Professional Development (CPD) workshops in 9 geographically dispersed areas. Co-development of educational materials by nursing education experts from the Welsh NHS (Lead Mrs Karla Hobbs); Cardiff University Healthcare (Education Lead Dr Anna Jones) and University of Namibia (Nursing Leads: Mrs. Justa De Klerk & Mrs. Lilian S Masule) under leadership of Dr Rachel Freeman) Social Work education expert. Co-production & delivery of Namibian training content. Training of trainers' opportunities and an international network of nursing expertise in Higher Care Nursing developed. Group work exercises. Plenary discussions. Simulation exercises.

## 5. ACHIEVEMENTS

- UNAM Management obtained N\$20 million from Wales and Africa Grant.
- Grant delivered Namibian-customized Nurse training content in Oxygen Therapy & Ventilation Case Management.
- UNAM Cares delivered 10 x Oxygen Therapy and Ventilation Case Management trainings towards Disaster Risk Reduction under the Wales & Africa Grant
- Increased Professional Nursing
- Competencies in Oxygen Therapy and Ventilation Case Management among 217 nurses across Namibia
- Trainings conducted in Windhoek (2x Khomas) region, Rundu (Kavango-West), Nkurenkuru (Kavango-East), Katima Mulilo (Zambezi), Ondangwa/Tsumeb (Oshikoto), Oshakati (Oshana), Keetmanshoop (//Karas), Gobabis (Omaheke) and Mariental (Hardap) region.



Simulation exercise in Nkurenkuru COVID-19 Isolation Unit  
Left: Ms. Justa De Klerk, Mrs. Lilian Masule & Right: Dr Rachel Freeman  
Hardap Oxygen Therapy Training  
The Namibian Newspaper Article, 05 Oct 2021, pg. 6



Gobabis Oxygen Therapy Training Oxygen Therapy Trainers Oshikoto Oxygen Therapy Training

## 6. CONCLUSION

The poster concludes and recommends more continuous professional development trainings for capacity building of health care professionals on disaster risk reduction. Regular trainings will increase disaster readiness and strengthen preparedness to respond competently to the early warning signs. Early action needs to be taken on the impact of any disaster or infectious diseases (e.g. COVID-19) among communities, which will assist governments, parastatals, and the private sector to collaborate with communities to become resilient during disease outbreaks. It will assist to inform and develop a better understanding of communities needs towards (re)designing and adaptation of tailored policies and practice interventions in meeting communities' needs.

Early action will contribute to increase awareness and education in the elimination of COVID-19 or any other disaster outbreaks to strengthen contact tracing, testing, treatment and disaster risk reduction. Initiatives described in this poster will be ongoing, and future reports will describe how the University of Namibia's flagship CSR; UNAM Cares, government-community engagement partnership will make a difference in the lives of many Namibians. All aspects of the capacity building training described herein, were considered to be part of strengthening the public health systems response in Namibia geared towards kicking out COVID-19, which led the major reduction in COVID-19 cases in Namibia as well as an improved oxygen therapy and ventilation case management of patients with COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases in Namibia.



217 Nurses trained in Oxygen Therapy and Ventilation Case Management in response to COVID-19 sponsored by the Welsh Government

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