COMMSREG

The Connector

ESCCOM
ESWATINI
COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION

ESWATINI'S BROADCASTING CODE
WHAT IS NEW?

HEALTH & WELLNESS DURING LOCKDOWN

COVID-19 TESTIMONIALS

BE CYBERSMART STAY SAFE

ESCCOM UNIVERSAL ACCESS AND SERVICE

Working Towards A Fully Connected Eswatini

ESWATINI COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

CONTACT US

Tel: +268 2404 7000
Email: info@esccom.org.sz
www.esccom.org.sz

Sibekelo Building, Fourth Floor North Wing, Mbabane, Eswatini

Eswatini Communications Commission

@ESCCOM_eswatini

Eswatini Communications Commission

VISION

To derive maximum socio-economic benefits for all Emaswati from ICTs through the effective regulation of telecommunications, broadcasting and postal servises in Eswatini

MISSION

VALUES

To be a dynamic regulator of communications services in Eswatini that facilitates the delivery of affordable, sustainable and quality services

- Integrity
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Innovation
- Knowledgeable

Contents

05 COVER STORY

20 I BEAT CORONAVIRUS

19

ESCCOM IS MOVING

Editor's Note

What a rollercoaster the last few months have been. Most of the work in putting together this newsletter was actually done outside the office as Eswatini declared a State of Emergency in March 2020 and the country has gone through two partial lockdowns to date, with continuous revisions of Regulations to try and protect citizens. Cases continue to rise and everyone has been impacted. ESCCOM staff members have not been spared, with some testing positive. Every staff member has been required to test more than once, and that experience on its own, is an unpleasant but necessary one. In this issue, two colleagues; Tsandzekile Makama, and Percy Ndlangamandla, were brave enough to share their experiences on surviving Covid-19 and what the whole experience taught them. Life continues, despite this global pandemic that quickly became the biggest challenge of 2020 across all sectors.

Work and school have moved from physical interactions to online platforms. This increased dependence on digital places even more focus on connectivity for all, the essence behind Universal Access and Service (UAS). Our main article dives into the UAS concept and what it means for Emaswati, across the health, education and public administration sectors. The Director for ESCCOM's Universal Access and Service Fund also shares his personal side in our interview with him.

With most activities moving online, criminals are also continuously coming up with scams and tricks to steal information and finances from individuals and companies. With schools closed, children are spending more time at home, and they too can be victims of cybercrime. This issue zooms in on Child Online Safety to help parents and guardians.

The Commission, like most organisations, implemented the Work From Home (WFH) strategy. This was in a bid to balance employee safety and business continuity. With all its benefits, WFH has its own challenges that potentially compromise productivity. Various staff members were asked to share their tips on ensuring that they stay performing at their peak, even when away from their desks.

In the last edition, the consumer education section covered the rights and responsibilities of those who use communication products and services. In this issue, we outline the obligations of service providers. Should a consumer feel that these are not being met, they have a right to approach the Commission and seek redress. In our picture gallery, we share images from the Acting Minister's visit to the Commission offices in December. This was Senator Khumalo's first visit to the Commission since he assumed office, and therefore a truly momentous occasion.

Happy reading, and let's all stay safe!

Fisiwe

Editor
Fisiwe Vilane
Manager: Consumer Affairs and Communication

Executive Editor
Lindiwe Dlamini
Director: Strategy and Economic Regulation

Design Layout & Printing

LoBerry Agencies

Disclaimer

THE *Universal* ACCESS AND SERVICE FUND (UASF) IMPACT IN ESWATINI

The Universal Access and Service Fund (UASF), under the auspices of the Eswatini Communication's Commission has done well to improve access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in support of health, education and public administration in Eswatini. On August 19, 2020, the Acting Minister of ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo, officiated the presentation of over E39 million worth of ICT equipment under the UASF. The handover event was held at the Hilton Garden Inn, and was attended by multi-sector beneficiaries.

In the last two years, the Fund has completed a number of ICT projects that have benefited the Health and Education sectors as well as general communication infrastructure development across Eswatini, with special focus on the under served and disadvantaged communities.

The Acting Minister for ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo posing with the UASF Committee

The Acting Minister for ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo, confirmed that His Majesty's Government recognizes the important role of ICTs for rapid socio-economic growth and the need to harness efforts towards ensuring that all Emaswati including those with disabilities have access to this precious resource.

He observed that the Fund is already implementing His Majesty's directive which he pronounced when opening parliament. "His Majesty has challenged us to explore the benefits that comes with ICTs in all areas of economy such as education, health, agriculture, business, and to also consider access to ICTs as a public good. All the Universal Access and Service Fund projects are an indication that government is steadfast in its quest to ensure that ICTs are at the centre of economic growth."

He added that "The Fund has no doubt transformed the ICT sector and lives of each beneficiary in an unprecedented way. Such tangible interventions and direct benefits are what makes government proud, this is what government expects when entrusting certain people with responsibilities. What the Fund has delivered is an epitome of success and proper management of resources." He ended by wishing the Committee all the best and pledging government's support as the next Universal Access and Service Strategy for 2021 is being developed.

The Acting Chairperson of the Universal Access and Service (UAS) Committee, Mr Ali Resting, handed over the Deed of Cession, marking the completion of projects to the Acting Minister. In his speech, Mr Resting emphasised that his Committee was established by the Electronic Communications Act of 2013 and is mandated to develop a three (3) year strategy with the purpose of ensuring that Communications and ICT services are made available, at the quality specified, to all end-users in Eswatini including those with disabilities, independent of geographical location and in the light of specific national conditions at an affordable price.

The Acting Minister receiving the Deed of Cession from UASF Committee Acting Chairperson Ali Resting

"This mandate entails the stimulation, the deployment and utilization of ICT across Eswatini and ensuring the availability and access of ICT services to all Emaswati" he added.

Ensuring universal access and service to ICTs entails bridging decades of the digital divide and providing access and service to what has been tamed as "underserved or unserved areas". The Fund has a duty to ensure that such terms as "underserved, unserved, digital divide" cease to exist in Eswatini. Technology remains a key factor towards economic growth for any country as it provides world-class access to information for all.

Alongside Mr Ali Resting in the UAS Committee are Mr. Mvilawemphi Dlamini, Mrs. Karen Mbuyisa, Mr. Alex Hlandze and Mrs. Bongiwe Dlamini. The Director within the Commission is Mr. Mbongeni Mtshali.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS AND SERVICE FUND PROJECT PROFILES

1.Set Up Of 3G/4G GSM Network In Rural Areas

This project saw 13 sites being built in rural Eswatini to provide connectivity and enable more citizens to exploit the benefits of participating in the digital economy era. Beneficiary communities from this project are Nsalitje, Godloza, Moti, Sigcineni, Vulamehlo, Zindwendweni, Mgobodzi, Mjoli, Nyakatfo, Lucolweni, Mpakeni, Sicunisa and Mahlahlane. The estimated cost of this project Fund is over E 30 Million.

The Acting Minister, Senator Manqoba Khumalo, symbolically handing over a laptop to Minister for Education, Honourable Lady Howard Mabuza. Also in the picture are the PS for ICT Mr. Maxwell Masuku, PS for Education Mr. Betram Stewart and UASF Acting Chairperson Mr. Ali Resting

Siphocosini High School students displaying laptops donated by the Universal Access and Service Fund.

2.Procurement Of 900 Laptops And Charging Cabinets

These laptops were bought for 20 schools across rural Eswatini, with each school getting 45 laptops. The devices will assist in promoting ICT as a subject and giving students the right tech skills in readiness for life after high school. The equipment comes with a three-year service warranty for the supplier to offer support and maintenance at no cost to the beneficiaries. The total cost of the project is E 6.2 Million.

Expressing her appreciation of this contribution, the Minister of Education, Honourable Lady Howard Mabuza, shared that "education and training is continuously working towards e- skilling young people for national prosperity and global competitiveness. We are grateful for the partnership that exists between us and ESCCOM which has resulted in this generous donation. The initiative we are witnessing today will go a long in ensuring that the quality education is improved. It is one of the critical steps towards ensuring increased uptake and usage of ICTs in the education sector."

3.Procurement of 45 Laptop Cabinets For The University of Eswatini

The devices were presented specifically to the Institute of Distance Education (IDE) Unit within the institution, in support of the drive to take the courses to the 4 regions of Eswatini. Students enrolled at the University will now be able to access more services remotely, without visiting the campuses, and this will save them travelling time and money.

ESCCOM CEO inspecting the IT equipment with UNESWA Vice Chancellor, Professor JM Thwala

UNESWA Vice Chancellor, Professor Thwala, mentioned that the donation could not have come at a better time, as the country battles with the effects of Covid-19. He observed that there is an increased need for digital literacy and access even at tertiary level, for students to continue with their academic pursuits.

4.Special Education Needs

The Fund supported students with special needs by purchasing Braille Note Apex computers for ten (10) high school students with visual challenges. The students can also learn ICT as a subject using the computers. These students were chosen from mainstream schools across Eswatini. The fund spent E 500 000 for this activity.

5.Connectivity to 35 Rural Health Centres

This project aims to assist the Ministry of Health in its drive to digitize the health sector with the aim of; improved record keeping, simultaneous effective monitoring of disease outbreaks, improved communication and information tools between health centres. This connectivity has enabled the use of the Client Management Information System (CMIS) to guarantee improved quality service delivery and proper management of patient information, which is in line with the overarching government policy documents.

The CMIS system is very crucial in-patient management and follow up and particularly managing information for people living with HIV and other conditions. The Fund spent E 1.8 Million for this activity.

6. Connectivity to 5 Tinkhundla Centres

This is a project that seeks to promote the decentralization of government services, enabling citizens to save on travel money and time, and promote efficiency in government processes. Emaswati from Lomahasha, Luve, Siphofaneni, Hluti and Gege Tinkhundla are now able to obtain birth certificates, identity documents, passports and register deaths and marriages within their community rather than travelling to receive these services. The Fund spent E 1.3 Million for the project. In Hluti and Lomahasha the connectivity was also extended to veterinary offices in an effort to assist farmers to access services in their local areas.

7.Provision of public Wi-Fi

In partnership with Jenny Eswatini, the Fund enables visitors to enjoy complimentary 100Mb data while in transit through national entry points. This project is already running at King Mswati III Airport, as well as Ngwenya, Lavumisa, Matsamo and Mahamba border posts. Users also have an option to purchase top-up vouchers online, once they have depleted their free allocation.

The circle of beneficiaries keeps expanding and ongoing projects are:

1. ICT support to the Ministry of Health

The Fund continues to assist with the last mile connectivity of the health centers as part of digitizing the Health sector. This project particularly focuses on the Lubombo and Shiselweni regions which had been identified as lagging behind in terms of connectivity. The total cost is E1.8 Million.

2. ICT support to Ministry of Agriculture

Last mile connectivity will assist the Ministry to bring government services closer to Emaswati through the remote offices (RDAs). The Ministry has approximately eighty (80) sites outside of their Headquarters and of these, less than thirty (30) are connected to the Government network. Farmers currently travel long distances to get assistance for some services.

This connectivity project will enable officers from

these remote sites to access the main intranet and central database at the Government Computer Services. Once implemented, farmers will benefit from easier and more efficient livestock identification and traceability, soil testing reports, veterinary products systems and plant health inspection reports. The project has been costed at E1 Million.

3. ICT support to Ministry of Education

The Fund has been able to actively contribute to the promotion of ICT as a subject, teaching and learning tool. Collaboration efforts between the Ministry of ICT, Education and the Commission seek to assist in digitizing the education system in the country, with emphasis on the Ministry of Education to fully embrace the usage of technology as an enabler of teaching and administration.

The Ministry, through other development partners, is already working on connectivity programmes which will see most of the schools have access to internet. Alongside this initiative, there is a drive which is also supported by the Ministry of ICT to digitize the content for the Education sector. To this end, the Universal Access and Service Fund will continue to support the Ministry of Education in the following areas;

a. Special Education Needs

Technology devices will be purchased to assist students with special needs to actively participate in class like all the other students. The Committee will ensure that there is gender balance on the list of beneficiaries. The School for the Deaf has already been connected to the internet and will be receiving additional equipment to ensure that their students are not left behind.

Students with special needs participating in class using specialized technology devices

b. ICT as a Subject

The Fund will continue to support the rolling out of ICT as a subject in high schools, with special focus on rural schools that have no computers to enable practical learning of the subject.

4. Network Infrastructure Enhancement

The plan is to increase network coverage across Eswatini through the subsidization of new network expansions or the optimisation and enhancement of existing networks.

a. Mobile Network Expansion

The Fund will be doing an access gap analysis that will assist to identify needs in the rural and underserved areas. The results will inform the plan on how best to move forward.

b. Public Wi-Fi

The public Wi-Fi project will now focus on public health facilities, to enable Emaswati to update family on patients' condition.

5. Eswatini ICT Hubs

The Eswatini ICT Hubs are designed as one-stop integrated community centres which incorporate Government services. The ICT Hub concept complements the Government decentralisation strategy which seeks to bring Government services to the public.

The Hub will be the primary vehicle for the implementation of development communication and information as they will offer a wide range of services that communities can use for their own empowerment. A budget of E2 Million has been set aside for the project.

The Universal Access and Service Fund continues to transform lives by involving and consulting the key stakeholders, licensees and prospective beneficiaries. There is currently a review of the strategy, which in turn will inform the development of next 3-year strategy. The end goal is a fully connected Eswatini.

WIRELESS INTERNET

99.8% UPTIME | SPEEDS FROM 2MBPS

OFFERING THE BEST HOME & BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

PREMIUM PACKAGE
45GB 2/4mbps
E356P/M
X 24 MONTHS

UNCAPPED PACKAGE
2/4mbps
E536P/M
X 24 MONTHS

DO YOU NEED A WEBSITE?

PROFESSIONAL EMAILS IN YOUR COMPANY NAME?

REGISTER WITH US TODAY

OTHER SERVICES INCLUDE:

- ☑ WEBSITE DESIGN
- ☑ DOMAIN REGISTRATION & HOSTING
- ☑ EMAILS TAILORED TO YOUR DOMAIN
- ☑ REAL FILTERING
- ☑ BULK SMS
- ☑ WIFI HOTSPOT SETUP
- ☑ SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT
- ☑ ICT SKILLS & TRAINING

OFFICE OPERATING HOURS

MONDAY - FRIDAY	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
WEEKENDS	CLOSED
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS	CLOSED

FOR MORE INFORMATION
+268 2409 1000
Email:sales@realnet.co.sz
Web: http://www.realnet.co.sz

REAL IMAGE INTERNET
ESWATINI'S LEADING INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER

ONE ON ONE

WITH

MR MBONGENI MTSHALI
Director: Universal Access and Service

Hailing from Bhadzeni II Inkhundla, in Mankayane, Mbongeni Bafana Mtshali has experienced first-hand and understands life in the type of communities benefiting from the Universal Access and Service Fund. A telecommunications engineering practitioner who later joined the world of digital business, he is the man at the forefront of ensuring that all Emaswati become connected to Information Communication Technology (ICT)s.

1. How would you explain what you do to a 6 year old?

The task is to ensure that everyone in the Kingdom has access to quality information communication services regardless of their where they are in Eswatini, who they are, or health status, at a reasonable price. If you consider the times we live in, there are many changes in the way we do things and the way we access digital services. As the world changes and adopts digital payments, it is now more important than ever that enablers of these services provide the infrastructure required to drive this change. The Covid-19 pandemic introduced us to online learning and teaching which requires the country to provide technological infrastructure, Internet in particular.

2. In your personal experience, what is the major challenge in achieving the UAS vision?

The country is faced with economic and social challenges, making it difficult for stakeholders to prioritize delivery of technology-related services over basic human needs. Secondly, the adoption of technology in service delivery is still at its early stages which makes it harder for the ordinary citizen to choose technology over the traditional way of getting help. This being said, we are still working together with all stakeholders to ensure that all Emaswati have access to affordable, high speed internet and telephony services.

3.The past year has seen delivery of multiple projects under UAS, what would you attribute this success to?

It is a collaborative effort between the Government, the Commission (Regulator), and the licensees. The programmes, adopted in 2018, gave direction on what needed to happen, with getting

things done being the important aspect, as well as prioritizing the basic human need of connectedness.

4. Take us through your typical working day

Most of my days involve following up on projects and conducting site visits. On certain days I do administrative work – making sure mandatory status reports are sent and checked especially for risks identified, or potential delays in the delivery of the projects. This administrative work includes ensuring that suppliers are paid, stakeholders are kept informed on progress and that hurdles that have been identified by vendors are cleared. I also manage and execute the Fund Committee meetings and their action plan. This requires a close collaboration with the office of the Company Secretary.

5. What do you enjoy the most about your job?

Seeing the smiles of the beneficiaries when they receive a service we provide, or when they use the access devices, we give them to improve their lives and their learning experience. Changing people's lives by enabling them to either learn conveniently or connect to their families through the delivery of the projects, is very fulfilling.

6. Outside of work, what are you passionate about?

I enjoy helping people. I understand that in life we have to be there for each another. As a Christian, I believe that God will not come down physically to help but uses us to help others. Seeing the smile on someone's face melts my heart, especially those who may not be in a position to help you in return.

7. Who are the people who have had a major influence in your professional journey?

God is my source of strength and refuge, with my family being my anchor. There are few other individuals who have assisted me grow to be a better person, professional and a leader. From all these individuals the common lesson learnt is that leadership is not about title but positive influence.

8. What, do you think, are the keys to professional success?

The common concept I learnt through my professional journey is that no one will come and pick you up when you going through a difficult time, but rather find it in yourself to pick yourself up and get it done. The second thing is that a task is there to be completed, not deliberated on. Lastly, I have learnt that in the work environment we do tasks regardless of their size and how doing them will position us or influence people's perception of us. If it means we need to pack boxes, set up a backdrop, or whatever manual work, you do it with a joyful heart because it is the attitude that matters. My philosophy is that having a good attitude is more important than possessing all the skills for a job. Skills can be taught but attitude can never be taught.

9. What has been your career highlight specifically on delivering the UAS strategy

When we handed over the first projects to their beneficiaries. It has always been my passion to start something from scratch and see it being operational and yielding the desired results. One of the projects we did was to purchase specialized tablets for students in public schools who have interest in reading. When passing a vote of thanks on behalf of his colleagues, one student mentioned that the contribution changed their learning experience for the better, and further pointed out that learning will be joyful because of the tablets.

10. If you were guaranteed not to fail, what project would you embark on?

I never approach anything with a failing mentality. I go for all assignments with everything I have and find different ways of getting it done. My wish is for the country to have a plant to assemble tablets for the education sector. The plant would develop a platform which can be used to transform education in the country. This would include enabling the students to interact with their teachers and enable the school administration to access information almost in real time.

11. What is the biggest lesson that the advent of COVID-19 has taught you?

Mental strength is very important, the ability to cope with a negative situation in a healthy way. Bring mentally strong helps you to know what to do and how to do it. This includes the way you engage with people who are dealing with their own challenges. Amy Morin (https://www.success.com/7-reasons-you-need-mental-strength-to-be-successful/) in an article published in the Success magazine reflects on seven (7) reasons why we need mental strength to be successful. My attention especially drawn to a thought she shared on the subject. In this COVID-19 era, where there is lot of anxiety, fear and lots of uncertainty, mental strength keeps the fire burning and we draw from inner strength to get encouraged despite what is happening around us.

On a lighter note:

Facebook or Twitter?
Twitter

Reading or television?
Learning through various online platforms like LinkedIn Learning. I subscribed to this platform to try acquire new skills while taking my mind off the non-inspiring news.

Current Favourite song
Dr Tumi – No other God

Current read
God is my CEO – by Larry Julian

ESCCOM
IS MOVING TO A NEW HOME

The PS in the Ministry of ICT officiating the ESSCOM Head Office sod cutting ceremony

On Friday, 29 May 2020, the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of ICT, Mr Maxwell Masuku, on behalf the acting Minister of ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo, joined the ESCCOM Board Chairman, Mr Themba Khumalo and Chief Executive, Mvilawemphi Dlamini in officiating the sod-cutting and site handover for the construction of the Commission's new Head Office to be located in Ezulwini.

PS Masuku observed that "In its regulatory work the Commission is expected to regularly meet and engage with a lot of stakeholders and the general public as end-users of communication services in Eswatini. As such, for the Commission to effectively discharge its mandate, it is important that it establishes a permanent office that has the requisite facilities and space that would allow regular engagement with the licensees and the public".

The event was also attended by the Commission's Board members, Management, the project technical team and representatives from local media houses.

Speaking at the same event, the ESCCOM Board Chairman, Mr Themba Khumalo, revealed that the project, amongst other things, seeks to deliver a modern office structure that supports a user-friendly working environment, and facilitates easy business processes, coordination, as well as accessibility to all stakeholders of the Commission. He thanked all stakeholders for their support thus far, and wished the project teams and contractors all the best as they embarked on such a huge milestone.

The Chief Executive, Mr Mvilawemphi Dlamini, shared that the Head Office project was part of the Commission's 5-year strategy which envisages and underscores sustainability.

The site clearing was completed at the end of June 2020. The Earthworks and Piling stages have also been completed. The next phase, currently on tender, is the construction of the main structure. The whole project is set to be completed by year 2023. The new offices are a green building with a low carbon footprint that guarantees environmental sustainability.

The event was concluded with the cutting of the sod by the PS, Mr Maxwell Masuku, supported by the ESCCOM Board and Management.

Yehla PHELA
WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE

The ESCCOM #YehlaPhela winners: Sifiso Tshabalala, Tanya Butler and Sibusiso Ndzabukelwako

We can all agree, the advent of the Coronavirus was bad for the waistline and for the brain. The lockdown meant spending a lot of time in the house, with access to the fridge and food cupboards. The anxiety and stress associated with the uncertainty also pushed more people to comfort eating, as some form of coping mechanism. On the other hand, movement was limited and most days were now spent at home.

To promote a continued healthy lifestyle and support mental wellness, the Commission launched the #YehlaPhela Weight Loss Challenge. This challenge ran for 3 months, beginning 1st June and all staff was enrolled. Everyone's weight was recorded on launch day and recorded as their starting weight. Only one official scale was used each time, and subsequent weigh-ins were held every forth-night to track progress and serve as motivation. With a first prize of E5,000 up for grabs, with second and third place worth E3,000 and E1,000 respectively.

Hampers were also given away to the top 3 after each weigh-in interval, to reward gradual progress. This competition brought some much needed excitement amongst employees, and increased morale especially during such challenging times.

Weight loss was calculated using percentage of body weight loss to ensure fairness. Even though participants were expected to make changes to their eating habits, fad diets and meal supplements were discouraged. As a result of this initiative, more individuals were exercising and changing their lifestyle towards healthy eating.

On Friday, 4th September, the grand finale was held to announce the Challenge winners. Themed "Hloba Ngemvunulo Yakho", the event was a burst of colour and sharing of funny memories. The ultimate winner of the challenge was Sifiso Tshabalala who attributed his success to a strict running regime, and portion control during meals. Other winners were Tanya Butler and Sibusiso Ndzabukelwako who scooped second and third prize respectively. Speaking at the event, the CE thanked all staff for participating and encouraged everyone to continue eating heathy and exercising even beyond Yehla Phela.

Jenny

Reliable Business Solutions

Jenny Internet Eswatini offers reliable business solutions that assists organizations with seamless day-to-day operations.

Fibre via Wireless

The Jenny fibre via Wireless product provider your company with fibre speed connectivity without fibre with a guaranteed 98% annual up-time and dedicated Advanced Support.

Our wireless network is built to a standard that enables us to provide a dedicated throughput at a set contention ratio (the number of others sharing the internet feed) at our core.
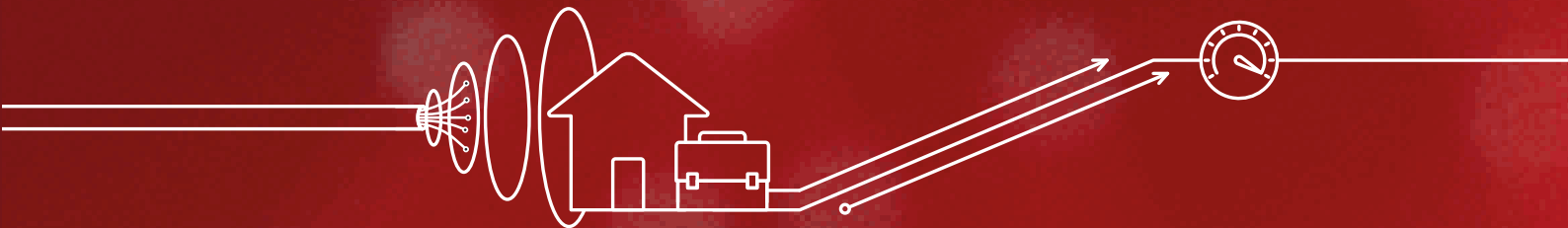
Point to Point

Large businesses often purchase point to point links for all their branches. This allows the business to manage their network from a single location. A single large Fibre via Wireless link at head office can be used for connectivity for the whole company.

THE BROADCASTING
QUALITY ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP

Eswatini Communications Commission is mandated by the Eswatini Communications Commission Act to 2013 to regulate and supervise the provision of radio and television broadcasting services and the content of those services, including promoting human resource development and management within the sector. In order to keep Eswatini's broadcasting sector relevant and in line with regional and global trends, there is need for continuous capacity building. To achieve this, the Commission hosted the Broadcast Quality Assessment workshop.

The training was held at the Royal Swazi Sun on the week of 7th to the 11th December, 2020. This was a follow up workshop from the Broadcasting Essentials one held earlier in the year. There were 25 attendees who represented all the public and private broadcasters in Eswatini; Eswatini TV, EBIS, Channel Yemaswati, VOC and UNESWA radio. The Ministry of ICT was also represented by officials from the Department of Communication.

The course facilitator was Mr Tinus Smit, a broadcasting veteran with more than 30 years' experience in both broadcasting fieldwork and training. Smit was seconded to Eswatini by SACIA, the Southern African Communications Industry Association.

The organisation exists to promote the adoption of professional standards and ethical business practice in the communications industry across Southern Africa, through market research, training and skills development, as well as intelligence and networking activities.Course content was focused on Quality Assessment including Quality Control, Standards as well as Measurement of Broadcasting Standards Delivery.

Participants were capacitated on the quality assessment process of audio and video signals, both analogue and digital, in line with International Telecommunications Union (ITU) standards. There were also practical demonstrations using video and audio signal measurement equipment.

Participants were also given an opportunity to configure this equipment in order to trap alarms and identify signal synchronisation issues.

Speaking at the workshop closing ceremony, ESCCOM's Director for Technical Services, Mr Thulani Fakudze expressed hope that the training has equipped the broadcasters with the knowledge they need to provide high quality broadcasting. "These efforts made by the Commission fall in line with His Majesty's Vision 2022 whose main objective is to improve the standard of living for all our people through access to quality services." he said.

He then went on to motivate broadcasters to consistently conduct their own HR initiatives to ensure that practitioners are always abreast with the latest trend and technologies in broadcasting.

ESCCOM
CONTRIBUTES TOWARDS SGUJANA SUBSIDY

The acting Minister of ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo ESCCOM CEO, Mvilawemphi Dlamini and the EPTC MD, Petros Dlamini during the Sgujana subsidy announcement event

In an effort to ensure that all Emaswati have access to adequate and accurate information during the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Commission subsidized the price of Set Top Boxes (Sgujana). The subsidy, valued at over E600 000, went towards reducing the price of boSgujana from the usual retail price of E250 to E100, effective immediately. The subsidy was announced to the public by the acting Minister of ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo, during a press briefing held at the Ministry offices.

Also present at the event were the Under-Secretary in the Ministry, Ms Ntombifuthi Sukati and the Director of Communications, Mr Andreas Dlamini.

The Minister commended the Commission for the support during such a pivotal time where communication is crucial, and confirmed that Eswatini Post and Telecommunications Corporation (EPTC) would distribute boSgujana at the subsidized price while stocks last. He also shared that Sgujana enables Emaswati to access Eswatini TV, Channel Yemaswati, EBIS 1 and 2, VOC 1 and 2, France 24 and Deutche Welle TV channels. The Minister, at the same event, announced that coverage of Eswatini TV and EBIS in the country was now at 90% and areas that previously didn't receive signal were now connected.

The subsidized set top boxes were sold out as Emaswati took advantage of this great offer. This was also another initiative where the Commission collaborated with Government to alleviate the effects of Covid-19 on the general populace.

WORLD POSTAL DAY

The 9th of October marks the annual celebration of World Post Day. This day is to celebrate the establishment of the Universal Postal Union in 1874, which is the second oldest International Organisation in the world. In 2020, The Universal Postal Union (UPU) hosted the first ever virtual commemoration of the event under the theme *More Than Mail.*

The UPU Director General, Bishar Hussein, in his statement highlighted the outstanding and critical work done by the postal industry during the global Covid-19 pandemic. "We all need to recognize the incredible sacrifices made by postal operators and their staff during the global COVID-19 pandemic. Deemed essential staff as the pandemic raged furiously across the world, these postal workers laboured hard to deliver the mail. Some workers tragically lost their lives; others confronted life-changing damage to their health. Many more suffered in numerous other ways." he said.

Locally, Eswatini Post and Telecommunications Corporation (EPTC) commemorated the day by announcing the launch of the "Track Service" which will enable Emaswati

to track their parcels through the various points of its journey. EPTC, specifically Swazi Post, also intends to soon launch a Door to Door delivery service.

On World Post Day, the Commission also had the liberty to join the EPTC team as they commemorated the day with the infamous "*Jerusalema Challenge*" at the Mbabane Branch of Swazipost. Operationally, ESCCOM is in the process of reviewing the 2017 Postal Guidelines and to this end, has developed the Postal Licensing Guidelines 2020. This review has been necessitated by the Universal Postal Union revision of the scope and definition the postal sector as well as the developments that have resulted in the digitization of the sector, and ultimately, the growth of e-commerce. The Postal Licensing Guidelines 2020 aim to provide guidance and clarity regarding the definition and scope of the Postal Sector in the Kingdom of Eswatini. Further, the Guidelines set out the legal and administrative process for the licensing of Postal and Courier services and the general terms and conditions that service providers are to comply with.

ACTING MINISTER VISITS
ESWATINI COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

On 3 December 2020, the Commission hosted the Acting Minister of ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo, on a familiarisation tour of the ESCCOM offices. The Minister was welcomed to ESCCOM by the Board Chairman, The Chief Executive and the Executive team. During this visit, Senator Khumalo was briefed on the Mandate and Strategy of the Commission. He then ended the visit by addressing the ESCCOM leadership and the media, emphasising government's support and the need to work together towards a developed ICT Sector in Eswatini.

The Acting Minister and his delegation being welcomed to Sibekelo Building

The Acting Minister and his delegation being shown around the Commission offices

A group photo of the dignitaries on the day

The Board Chairperson, Mr Themba Khumalo and the Chief Executive, Mr Mvilawemphi Dlamini with the Guest of Honour

The Media presentation with Ministry staff and the ESCCOM leadership team

The Acting Minister, Senator Manqoba Khumalo conversing with the Board Chairperson, Mr Themba Khumalo

ESCCOM's Lindiwe Dlamini directed the proceedings

The Chief Executive, Mr Mvilawemphi Dlamini breaking down the organisational strategy

The Board Chairperson, Mr Themba Khumalo presenting on the Commission's vision

The Acting Minister, Senator Manqoba Khumalo making his speech at the end of the tour

ESCCOM's Board Vice Chairperson, Polycarp Dlamini, the Ministry's Director of Communications, Andreas Dlamini and the ESCCOM Director of Strategy and Economic Regulation, Lindiwe Dlamini

ESCCOM EXTENDS ICT
SUPPORT TO MINISTRY OF HEALTH

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Health has since recruited more technical staff to assist in improving the health information system for timely reporting. The new personnel will be involved in data collection, staging, cleaning, analysis and reporting, especially for the surveillance Covid-19 data. Such data is collected from not only health facilities, but also from schools and home based care sources. To ease the burden of procuring working tools for the extra resources, the Communications Commission donated high technology laptops to the Client Management Information System (CMIS) Unit of the Ministry of Health. The value of the donation was E160,000.

vice delivery enabled by real time data transmission. Presenting the laptops on behalf of the Commission was Chief Executive, Mr Mvilawemphi Dlamini. In his remarks, he confirmed that the Commission is committed to assisting the Government of Eswatini in the efforts to combat the spread and surge of Covid-19, as the pandemic had caught everyone on a backfoot. He highlighted that this donation was in addition to several other Covid-19 relief contributions made to Government, and thanked Government for availing the opportunity to partner towards alleviating the socio-economic challenges of Emaswati. "The importance of ICT devices and infrastructure cannot be over-emphasized in the fight against Covid-19.

The PS for the Ministry of Health, Dr. Simon Zwane receiving the high technology laptops from ESCCOM CEO, Mr. Mvilawemphi Dlamini

A handover event was held at the Ministry's SNAP Boardroom on 15th October 2020. Receiving the equipment on behalf of the Eswatini Government was the Principal Secretary in the Ministry, Dr Simon Zwane.

Dr Zwane expressed gratitude to ESCCOM for the donation and highlighted that it was an extension of the existing relationship between the 2 organisations as CMIS and the Ministry were already a key beneficiary under the Universal Access and Service Fund (UASF). He assured the benefactor that "This equipment will be solely used for database management and will enable timeous reporting at all levels.". He also shared that the rollout of the CMIS system across the country was ongoing and that 190 facilities are already live and able to provide quality ser-

ICT infrastructure is the foundation of the digital world, and digital technology supported by ICT infrastructure is the cornerstone to fighting the pandemic.

Digital technologies such as big data, AI and cloud computing supported by ICT networks are crucial to monitor and analyze the pandemic, track the virus, prevent and control the pandemic, treat patients and allocate resources. It is our belief that these computers shall play a huge role in the fight in this regard." he said.

The event was also attended by the Director of Health Services, Dr Vusi Magagula, Ministry of ICT officials, Ministry of Health staff from different units, ESCCOM officials and the media.

ESWATINI BROADCASTING CODE 2020

In line with its mandate to establish Quality of Service (QoS) codes as well as content and censorship codes for the broadcasting sector, the Commission has consequently developed and published the 2020 Eswatini Broadcasting Code. This is the result of a process that involved extensive consultations with all the licensees in the broadcasting sector, as well as interested stakeholders and the general public.

This Code covers areas of Program Scheduling, Inclusiveness and Accessibility, Copyright as well as Advertising Guidelines across both television and radio platforms. The main pillars of the Code are as follows;

- *Seeks to ensure that there is no broadcasting of material that is unsuitable for children before watershed; before 2300hrs and after 03:30hrs. All programmes outside of the watershed period should be family oriented.*
- *To guide broadcasters on programme classification and ranking, so that all content is appropriately scheduled.*
- *To uphold advertising principles that minimise the risk of causing harm, offence and prejudice to human dignity. The advertising section of the code also addresses issues of infomercials, religious adverts, misrepresentation, false advertising and also specifies the professions that are prohibited from advertising on broadcasting platforms.*
- *To preserve editorial intergrity in sponsored programmes. This will ensure that such programmes do not directly encourage the purchase of the sponsor's product or service.*
- *A call for all public broadcasters to strive to offer a broad range of services aimed in particular at people who are physically challenged, and in particular, persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who are blind or partially sighted. Stations should also strive to air programmes addressing issues of people with disabilities, with a view to improve their welfare. The Code also prohibits humour based on disability. In addition, specific steps must be taken by broadcasted to ensure enjoyment and understanding of programmes by people with disabilities. These include the use of captions, subtitles, and sign language inserts.*
- *To increase local content on both television and radio platforms, including the use of Eswatini's indigenous languages, production at Eswatini locations and use of Emaswati as talent in the pre and post production of programmes.*
- *To provide guidance on permissions and contracts with copyright licensing bodies before material is flighted.*
- *Protecting the right to privacy for individuals by not allowing the intrusion into purely personal matters which have no bearing on public interest. Broadcasters are directed not to reveal identities of vulnerable individuals including victims of sexual offences, victims of accidents and violent crimes, or anyone caught in an emergency. In the same vein, broadcasters cannot share private conversations without consent, unless it is in the public interest.*

The Code is now in full effect and the complete document is available on the ESCCOM website. The Commission is monitoring programming to ensure compliance. Where violations are reported by consumers; whether viewers or listeners, the Commission will take the necessary action and may impose a fine or penalty in line with the ESCCOM Act.

I BEAT CORONAVIRUS AND ESWATINI WILL TOO

The world is in the middle of a health crisis and the biggest challenge for all sectors. Eswatini has felt its impact and cases are still rising, despite numerous interventions to try and flatten the curve. ESCCOM staff members have also been part of the statistics. Despite the cases increasing, Eswatini has also seen a good recovery rate. This gives hope that a positive diagnosis is not a death sentence and that Covid can be conquered.

Tsandzekile Makama
Admin Assistant

How did you find out you were infected?

As someone who has always tried their best not to get infected, I had my suspicions when one of my sisters developed flu-like symptoms. My mother and youngest sister began to show the same symptoms after being in contact with her. I began having a sore throat and by the time ESCCOM advised all staff members to get tested, I had developed most of the other COVID-19 related symptoms. Since I was pregnant at that time, ESCCOM Support Services felt it would be best to have my gynaecologist inform me of my results.

What was your initial reaction, when you received the results?

I was surprisingly calm. In fact, I suspected that I was positive because my family had all been informed that they had tested positive the previous day and having the same symptoms had been confirmation enough.

Who was the first person that you told?

I told my mother and sister because we had already been in self isolation at home.

What were the lifestyle changes that you had to make given your Covid-19 positive status?

I had to activate my faith in God more. I started drinking more hot beverages and instead of my usual habit of binging on junk food, I switched to healthy balanced meals. I also had to steam a lot using Eucalyptus and Umsutane leaves.

What do you think was the major factor that helped you survive?

The one thing that I can confidently say helped me survive COVID-19 is my faith in God. Another factor had been my state of mind, I tried not to panic and took it one day at a time. Medication and steaming also helped me.

How is your behaviour different now, from before you were infected?

Well, I must say that I am more cautious and more understanding of the COVID-19 virus. I am more sympathetic and empathetic to be people who have tested positive. I try to offer more support through prayer, calls and texts. I also share information on what helped me overcome this virus.

What would you say to someone who still doesn't believe that Covid is real?

COVID-19 is very real. It is not just a flu; it is worse than flu. What I experienced when positive, I would not wish it on anyone else, not even my worst enemy.

Percy Ndlangamandla
Legal Officer

How did you find out you were infected?

I found out that I was infected when I started showing mild symptoms and we were home preparing for my late brother's funeral. My condition quickly deteriorated and I got tested by doctors who were monitoring my father and mother at home.

What was your initial reaction, when you received the results?

I was less surprised when I received my results. I already assumed I was infected due to the condition I was in.

Who was the first person that you told?

I told my mother. She was the one so concerned about my condition despite that she was also ill.

What were the lifestyle changes that you had to make given your Covid-19 positive status?

Lifestyle changes because of testing positive were not major. I had to ensure I isolate, with much difficulty of course because of a lot had to get done in preparations of my brother and later my mother's funerals. Everyone understood I had to isolate and supported me in every way possible under the circumstances.

What do you think was the major factor that helped you survive?

The major factor that helped me survive was my mental strength. I had a lot to deal at the time that I was sickly. I had to carry myself through. With Covid, the battle becomes psychological more than anything else. You think of what's the worst thing that might happen. Am I going to survive or die. At that time, you are isolated and on your own for extended periods. You have your mother gone, brother gone and some 6 family members also infected. Yes, medication is what heals you but you need the strength to believe that you will be okay.

How is your behaviour different now, than before you tested positive?

My behaviour has not changed much. Before being infected, I was already practising health protocols. Sanitizing and washing of hands, social distancing and wearing of masks. I think with how almost the entire population being infected, we are at more risk of exposure than before, despite efforts to prevent that. It's a matter of continuing to practise that.

What would you say to someone who still doesn't believe that Covid is real?

It would really be stupid for anyone not to believe Covid is real. I would wonder which planet such person comes from.

KEEPING KIDS SAFE WHILE ONLINE

Today's children can access more information than any generation before. Thanks to the Internet, we all now have a wealth of information that can enrich our lives in new and wondrous ways. However, the Internet also has the potential to harm us and the people we love.

Technology has re-socialised us and changed the behaviour of both parents and children. While children's access to devices was considered a luxury and mainly for entertainment before, the same devices are now essential to keep in touch and for education lessons, especially during this time of Covid-19.

ROLE OF PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

Parents are now forced to unlearn certain attitudes towards cellphones and tablets. They are also required to now re-assess the punishments linked to the use of technology in the households. For adults, a mindset change is needed because life is vastly different today. Taking an interest in children's online activities, and creating boundaries and time limits is no longer optional.

Parents also need to be positive role models by not spending too much time on their smartphones especially during family time and while eating. Children should also be made to feel secure enough to ask or alert the parent of anything suspicious that they may encounter online.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is the use of digital technologies with an intent to offend, humiliate, threaten, harass or abuse somebody. This can be through a mean text message, rumours spread on social media sites, and even posting personal information about someone online. Most young people see cyberbullying as worse than face to face bullying. It is not just a problem in Eswatini, but a worldwide challenge, and it makes our children feel helpless and depressed, to the extent of making excuses not to go to school because they are feeling embarrassed.

Signs that a child is a victim of cyberbullying include them being irritable or looking frustrated after being online, and self-destructive behaviour. Some of them may also be extra secretive about their online activities, and avoid conversations that involve discussions about their social media. Unless these children have an adult that they feel safe to talk to, they may even resort to suicide in order to avoid further humiliation.

The one advantage of cyberbullying is that it leaves a trail. It is recommended to keep all evidence of cyberbullying by taking screenshots of offensive posts or messages and keeping them safe. These will come in handy if at any time you decide to report the bullying.

SCREEN TIME

A healthy mind is a brilliant one. The aim is to balance between the time that children spend online and their time away from technology. Children spend a lot of time behind the screens in today's connected world. Their activities include; gaming, movies and music, social media and the most important one, education.

The advantages of screen time include fine motor and problem-solving skills as technology is a more socially acceptable method of communication nowadays and sets up young people for better opportunities and networks because of the exposure to information beyond their immediate environment. The disadvantages include exposure to predators and mature content, less time for family and offline friends, decreased fitness levels and possible weight gain, as well as risk of muscular, skeletal and sleeping disorders especially with addiction to gaming and social media.

As a parent, you might consider limiting and enforcing the number of hours per day or week your kids can use devices, the types of devices they can use, and what types of activities they can do or programs they can watch.

Parents and guardians still need to also validate the information that children and the youth consume online. Parents also need to put in the right discipline measures where children are now abusing the privilege of being able to access the Internet.

FAMILY STRATEGY FOR ONLINE PROTECTION

1. Supervise online activity by children – Talk with your kids so they can start understanding media literacy and practicing self-regulation. It's also a good way to discover what they like doing online

2. Configure security on software and unauthorised downloads.

3. Clean up devices of all inappropriate content.

4. Encourage children to ask for permission before using devices.

5. Open room and create a safe environment for children to ask questions and ask for help

6. Do not demonise the Internet. Acknowledge that it has both good and bad elements.

7. Give age-appropriate advice especially on issues of grooming and sharing. Make sure you are clear with your children about what you consider appropriate online and texting behavior. Also advise them on the future implications of what they share online.

8. Teach good digital citizenship. Our children should be taught to use the Internet responsibly, and not display negative behaviour towards other users.

9. Block the Offenders – Advise young children to assess how serious the cyberbullying is. If it is light name calling from somebody that they do not know; it may be easier to block or report it on social media and WhatsApp.

10. Make Use of Screen Time Management Tools and Applications – For iPhone use there is an application called Apple Screen Time, and Android has Google Family Link. Both help parents and guardians to control how much time kids spend on mobile devices.

The aim is not to limit access, but rather to teach proper habits. The Internet and online access should be an ongoing discussion in the household. If you find yourself spending more time with your kids at home— by choice or necessity — you'll be glad you took the time to guide them online.

So do your part, let's all keep children in Eswatini cybersafe.

SERVICE PROVIDER OBLIGATIONS

The previous issue of COMMSREG covered the rights and responsibilities of consumers who purchase and use communication products and services. We go on to detail the expected deliverables from licensed service providers. In the context of the Regulator, a Service Provider is any licensee authorized to provide electronic communications, broadcasting and postal services.

Service providers have a responsibility to comply with the following parameters;

1. Customer Care System

A Service Provider shall establish a consumer care charter which also includes the enquiry and complaints process, and maintain adequate trained personnel to receive and respond promptly to inquiries and complaints from consumers. The service provider is also expected to take all commercially reasonable action to promptly remedy and avoid the recurrence of the cause of all consumer complaints that relate to the quality, availability or delivery of the service;

2. Provision of Information

All Service Providers shall provide clear and understandable information, visibly displayed to consumers or would-be consumers at all business premises of the service provider and the service-provider's website. This information shall include among other details;
- the name of the service provider;
- toll-free consumer service numbers
- tariffs and prices related to their product offering, including specials and promotions, as approved by Eswatini Communications Commission

3. Non-discrimination

A Service Provider shall provide services without discrimination amongst consumers of like classes or category of consumers or to any person who wishes to become a consumer.

4. Service Level Agreements

A service provider shall notify customers of the full terms and conditions, before the provision of any service. These should either be provided in written form (whether electronic or hard copy) or subscribers should be directed to where they can obtain a copy of the terms and conditions. The Service Provider must ensure that their terms and conditions are fair, transparent and written in plain, clear and straight forward language. The contract shall spell out necessary redress mechanisms in the event of failure to provide the promised service.

5. Accurate Billing

Licensed operators shall issue bills which are clear, and establish verifiable charges in a format that can be easily understood, so that consumers can confirm or challenge billing information. These billing records shall be retained by the operators for at least five (5) years.

6. Complaints and Redress

Service Providers shall develop, publish and implement customer service guidelines for use by its employees to resolve disputes in an effective and efficient manner. Service Providers shall also make the Commission's contact details available to consumers, notifying consumers that they may raise their complaint to the Commission if their original complaint is not handled to their satisfaction by their licenced operator and in accordance with that licenced operator's complaints handling procedure.

7. Privacy and Confidentiality

Service Providers must take steps to protect the Consumer's privacy regarding personal information. Service Providers shall protect consumers from unauthorised use of their personal records and information for illegal, unsolicited, unwanted or offensive communications. These provisions must not apply where consumers give their informed permission and express consent to the disclosure of personal information.

8. Environmental Responsibility

Service Providers should be highly sensitive to the impact of their actions on the physical environment, which must be aimed at fostering conservation of the environment to ensure a high level of safety and quality of life for present and future generations.

Where a consumer feels that their service provider is not delivering on any of the above obligations, they have a right to file a complaint. Should he/she be dissatisfied with the Service Provider's response to their complaint, they may approach Eswatini Communications Commission through any of the contact mediums. The Commission shall investigate any complaint referred to it and make a decision in writing to both the consumer and the Service Provider.
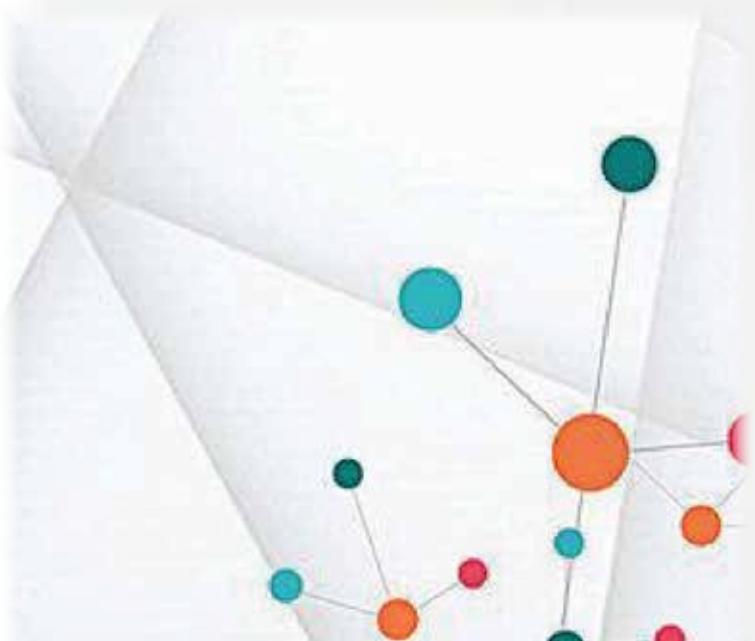
WORKING FROM HOME COPING TIPS!

Since the first lockdown was announced, a lot of organisations heeded Government's call to close and keep employees at home. The Commission, falling under essential services, introduced a Work From Home framework to balance business continuity but still ensure the safety of staff.

The new normal requires the adoption of a new routine, and has challenged productivity and morale amongst employees across the world. It's a new phenomenon, and the adaptation was urgent, with no chance of a gradual transition. From each Directorate, one team member was asked to share how they have kept their productivity levels up and ensured that they remained effective, away from their regular workstation. Here is what they had to say:

NONHLANHLA DLAMINI
FINANCE

- **Setting and sticking to a normal routine**; Waking up early like I am going to work has helped me ensure that by 0800hrs I am ready to start work for the day.

- **Having a dedicated workspace**; I setup the study as my normal workspace and it is quiet and free from distractions.

- **Having a daily work plan**; I prepare a structured work plan for each day which ensures that I meet my weekly targets.

- **Taking Breaks**; I take the normal work breaks like tea and lunch breaks which helps me refresh.

- **By Staying Connected**; I stay connected with my team and co-workers via email, WhatsApp and Zoom.

- **By Getting Exercise**; By taking long walks and jogging after working hours daily just to clear my mind and for my overall wellbeing.

NORMA FRUHWIRTH
LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE

- I wake up as early as 6 am and make sure that I start work at 8am to maintain regular working hours consistently from Monday to Friday.

- I work in a quiet and comfortable place in the house. The selection of a quiet and comfortable place is a critical tip for working from home.

- My study room, is the most quiet and comfortable place in the house where I set up my laptop and working materials.

- Every Monday I draft a work plan for the week which keeps me focused on my work throughout the week and ensures that I finish all daily tasks.

SAMUKELISO DLAMINI
STRATEGY AND ECONOMIC REGULATION

"When working from home you have to figure out where to work and how to create boundaries between work and personal life. Fortunately for me I stay alone in my own house within the family compound so identifying a place to work was easy. When it comes to creating boundaries between work and personal life, I informed family members that when they see my car parked, it is not because I am on leave but it is because I am working from home.

I maintain regular working hours by creating a schedule of what needs to be done for a day. The target is that I complete tasks between 8am and 1pm, whilst energy levels are still high. From 2pm I then perform tasks that have a completion deadline of the following day, or in future.

I created a morning routine which involved waking up at 7am, reboot my Wi-Fi and make breakfast so that by 8am I am in front of my laptop to start on my planned work schedule. Working from home comes with the flexibility of either waking up earlier than your set routine or working late in the night if there is something urgent.

Being in touch with my colleagues was very important as well. I would share what I have to do or what I was busy with. This could be either through voice call or WhatsApp. To maintain high levels concentration, I would have snac ks nearby which I would nibble on during my breaks. Breaks would be taking a brief walk around the compound or stand in the veranda and look at the mountain views.

SALEBONA SHONGWE
TECHNICAL SERVICES

Well during the WFH period, one thing I prioritised is continuing to have normal working habits. This included waking up by 7am or earlier. By 8 am I am literally sitting at my workstation with a good cup of coffee at hand, looking through my notebook and jotting what needs to be done for the day. I am a person who likes coffee, so working from home and being able to start my day with a good cup of coffee from my espresso machine helped to keep me looking forward to every morning.

SIYABONGA KHUMALO
SUPPORT SERVICES

Working from home requires one to be very disciplined since you have to deal with so many distractions, below are the tips to ensure one's productivity while away from their workstation;

- Wake up and prepare as if you are going to work,
- Have a dedicated work space, get yourself a comfortable chair and small table (not on your bed),
- Daily routine is important e.g., structure your day and set targets,
- Take breaks if needed,
- Remember to stay off social media till you have achieved your daily targets,
- Household errands can be done later after wrapping up your work for the day.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Eugene Simelane
Manager: Strategy and Performance Improvement

NEW EMPLOYEES

Date Joined: August 2020.

Eugene joins ESCCOM from Eswatini Revenue Authority (SRA) where he was Manager for Strategy and Planning. His previous work experience includes being Project Development Manager at Eswatini Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise (ESWADE), Economist at the Ministry of Agriculture and the Secretary for the Joint Water Commission (JWC) between Eswatini and South Africa.

His areas of expertise include strategy management and monitoring, performance management, development of policies and plans, as well as coordination and compilation of reports including integrated reporting. Mr Simelane holds a Master of Science in Agricultural Economics, Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Sciences and is also a Management Development Programme delegate.

ESCCOM INTERNSHIP INTAKE 2020

As part of industry development initiatives, the Commission also took on 2 interns under the Technical Services Directorate. The ESCCOM internship programme is a great way for students to explore the ICT career that they are interested in, and provides real-world experience that enables them to put everything they have learned into action.

Internship also helps students gain relevant skills that they can even apply to future jobs in their field. The partnership between ESCCOM and tertiary institutions assists to train future engineers by giving practical experience in the work environment in readiness for when they graduate

Themba Mkhatshwa and Mfanukhona Gama were attached to the Spectrum Management Unit for 8 weeks, as part of their 4th year B. Eng. Electrical and Electronics Degree course at the University of Eswatini (UNESWA). Whilst at the Commission, the students were involved in a project on FM radio spectrum allocation. Their work formed part of the input into the report on FM band spillover issues with SA and Mozambique. This report will also be used by ESCCOM in coordinating engagements with the two neighbouring countries.

Themba is passionate about Automation and Robotics in the technology field and in his spare time is an avid soccer player. Mfanukhona is a hardware geek with special interests in Micro-Controllers and Programming, and also holds a yellow belt in Kyokushin Karate.

Themba Mkhatshwa

Mfanukhona Gama

MY INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE AT ESCCOM

By Themba Mkhatshwa

I spent two months at the Eswatini Communications Commission, as part of my internship for my Bachelor of Engineering, with Electrical and Electronics major. Me and my classmate, Mfanukhona, were honoured to have been accepted for this great opportunity to work and learn.

Our internship began on 1 September 2020. On the first day, we were introduced to all staff members. We received a warm welcome, and most of our new colleagues were happy to meet us and assured us that they are available to assist with information and assistance throughout our time at ESCCOM.

We were attached to the Spectrum Management Unit within the Technical Services Directorate. A lot of emphasis was placed on reading, so that we understand the subject better. That is when I got to understand that spectrum management is responsible for radio frequency planning, allocation and monitoring. We also received laptops and other working tools, which made us feel like real employees.

Personally, as I gained a better understanding on the objectives of spectrum monitoring, my interest in that specialty increased. I learnt that Spectrum Monitoring is the observation and analysis of how radio spectrum is being used, as well as the implementation of measures to control unauthorized use. The Spectrum Management Unit uses four fixed stations at Fonteyn, Logoba, Matsapha and Sikhuphe as well as one mobile monitoring station. These are used to identify the spectrum profile for each band; very high (VHF) and ultra-high frequency (UHF).

Spectrum monitoring is also done to help write qualitative reports about spectrum occupancy and field strength across Eswatini. This helps to know the amount of utilized and available spectrum and such information is used by the Commission to effectively manage the use of available, unused and unassigned spectrum in order to avoid harmful interference that may be caused by spectrum users. The spectrum monitoring team plays a significant role in solving interference problems mainly by tracing the source of the interference using direction finding techniques.

INTERESTING PART OF THE INTERNSHIP

The most interesting part of my internship was being assigned a project to identify the FM radio channels encroaching into Eswatini from South Africa and Mozambique. This project gave us hands on field experience since we went out exploring the country and searching for these channels. A major lesson for mw was that the first step to solving a problem is to put together a plan, before taking any action.

CHALLENGES DURING THE INTERSHIP

Initially, I found it challenging to find out and learn things on my own since we were left to work independently. Most of the equipment that we were given to use was unfamiliar to us, and we had to figure out some tools on our own during the course of the project. We spent quite a bit of time trying to figure out solutions using those tools.

This whole exercise eventually turned out to be a great lesson as successful engineers are required to take initiative, act boldly without hesitation and think outside the box.

The overall experience taught me the importance of having a positive attitude and strong work ethic in the workplace. I also learnt to communicate better and make follow-ups where necessary, than just waiting to be told everything. I now take more responsibility even outside the workplace, and I have learnt to try all possible solutions before running to my supervisor with a problem.

I would like to thank ESCCOM for the opportunity to intern in their environment at such a challenging time of Covid-19. Special appreciation goes to the Spectrum Management team who empowered me and are the reason I am knowledgable in the subject. They still made time for us even though they had their own assignments to deliver on.

Finding foreign FM radio channels using Narda IDA2

A CYBERSAFE ESWATINI FOR ALL

Acting Minister for ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo launching the Cyber Security Awareness Campaign

November 2020 was Eswatini's second National Cybersecurity Month commemoration. The Acting Minister for ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo, launched the annual campaign and its website on Monday 2 November 2020, at an event held at the Royal Villas in Ezulwini. The theme for the 2020 campaign was "Do your part, #BeCyberSmart". The objective of the Month long campaign was meant to capacitate individuals and organizations, through providing them with tools and tips on the role they can play to ensure their safety in cyberspace as well as protection for all.

In his speech, the Acting Minister shared that the campaign is meant to "invoke a culture of security and responsibility by teaching and raising awareness about cyber threats including the prevention of data breaches, securing and managing sensitive data, email and phishing, and the ethical obligation for policy makers and leaders to preserve and protect confidential data." He went on to challenge all strategic partners to work together for Eswatini to realise her long term vision.

The Acting Minister for ICT, Senator Manqoba Khumalo flanked by ESCCOM CEO, Mr. Mvilawemphi Dlamini and the Ministry of ICT's Director of Communications, Mr Andreas Dlamini at the National Cybersecurity Awareness Month launch event.

The Acting Minister posing with dignitaries at the Cyber Security Awareness Launch

Also speaking at the launch, the Commission's Chief Executive, Mr Mvilawemphi Dlamini, highlighted that the digital domain poses a new type of threat to our safety and security. Over and above the conventional threats, "we are now also confronted with the scourge of online scams, fake news, and cyber-attacks in the digital world. Malicious cyber-attacks can and do debilitate entire systems, disrupt the economy and daily lives, and even lead to injury and death." He said.

Throughout the month, the Ministry of ICT and Eswatini Communications Commission as coordinator, led several campaign activities with multiple stakeholders to raise awareness on safety in cyberspace. Partner organizations for 2020 included Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS), Central Bank of Eswatini (CBE), Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA), Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP), MTN Eswatini, Eswatini Mobile, EPTC, Bankers' Association, the office of the DPM as well as various government departments. The campaign's media partners were Eswatini TV and EBIS.

Each week during the month of November was dedicated to a specific cybersecurity related theme and the 4 themes were:

Week 1 – Take stock and secure your mobile device
Week 2 – Keep your family safe online
Week 3 – Fraud and Scams, in line with Fraud Awareness Week
Week 4 – Secure your personal data

During the month, the Awareness and Outreach team visited four of Eswatini's tertiary institutions; Ngwane Teacher's College, William Pitcher College, Eswatini College of Technology (ECOT) and Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT).

The purpose of these visits was to present to students and lecturers on the cybersecurity issues affecting Eswatini and how individuals and organisations can stay protected from risks and threats while using the Internet.

The team also hosted a 2-day capacity building workshop at the Royal Science Technology Park (RSTP). This Digital Forensics session was held to enhance knowledge for members of the judiciary around cybersecurity issues.

Areas covered include digital evidence collection during an investigation, preservation while waiting for a court date, as well as presentation during the court proceedings. It was attended by court clerks from the High Court and Magistrates courts within the Mbabane and Manzini corridor.

A session was also help with Eswatini parliament's ICT portfolio committee to share on the dangers and risks associated with internet usage. Legislators were empowered on the need to maintain digital privacy and they took the opportunity to learn from subject experts on the current cybersecurity issues taking place in Eswatini and across the world.

Cloud Connect

. Direct link to AWS, GCP, Azure & OCI
. 4 usable public IP addresses included
. Optional 1 month paid trial
. Dedicated internet Acess
. No fibre access cost
. 98% Link availability SLA

CLOUD CONNECT 5
5 Mbps
Download and Upload Speed

Contract Period
24 MONTHS

E11,800

CLOUD CONNECT 10
10 Mbps
Download and Upload Speed

Contract Period
24 MONTHS

E21,850

CLOUD CONNECT 15
15 Mbps
Download and Upload Speed

Contract Period
24 MONTHS

E31,135

CLOUD CONNECT 20
20 Mbps
Download and Upload Speed

Contract Period
24 MONTHS

E39,440

CLOUD CONNECT 30
30 Mbps
Download and Upload Speed

Contract Period
24 MONTHS

E53,240

CLOUD CONNECT 40
40 Mbps
Download and Upload Speed

Contract Period
24 MONTHS

E67,430

CLOUD CONNECT 50
50 Mbps
Download and Upload Speed

Contract Period
24 MONTHS

E80,081

CLOUD CONNECT 100
100 Mbps
Download and Upload Speed

Contract Period
24 MONTHS

E144,150

78081006   info@touchitnetworks.com

Touch IT NETWORKS

MORE INFORMATION   TOUCHITNETWORKS.COM

Protect yourself and others from

COVID-19

WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

WEAR A MASK

Make wearing a mask a normal part of being around other people.

SANITIZE

Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent swallowing

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE

Maintain at least a 1-metre distance between yourself and others to reduce your risk of infection when they cough, sneeze or speak. The further away, the better.

USE DIGITAL PLATFORMS.

Explore online options for working, banking and communication to cut down on physical meetings and trips into crowded areas. Embrace technology as a safer option.

"Stay strong, together we can beat

COVID-19"