

Date: 10 October 2017

Okapembambu Primary School visits the Namibian Parliament

Okapembambu Primary School from the Kunene Region, visited the Namibian Parliament in Windhoek on Friday, 06 October 2017 and paid a courtesy call on the Speaker of the National Assembly. The visit formed part of a nationwide tour and also to pay tribute to the Late Hon Angelika Muharukua in the National Assembly

The purpose for the establishment of Okapembambu School back in the days, along with various other school units in Northern and North West Kunene during the same time and the years that followed, was to ensure access to education for Ovahimba, Ovazemba, and Ovatjimba communities (jointly known as the previously marginalised communities) - who are typical pastoralist and they live a nomadic life. The aforesaid communities depend on the natural environment and their livestock, consequently they migrate seasonally from one place to another in quest of better grazing for their livestock, living and practicing their cultural values. Back in the days the practice was that the teacher would move along the communities as they went after grazing with classroom tent, the community would lend a hand with transportation of learners' chairs and desks. Due to teacher's vivid dedication and determination Okapembambu School now has been centralized given a permanent home at Okapembambu.

Through education service delivery and community mobilisation strategies; the enrolment at the school has drastically increased since the establishment of Mobile School Units. The School grades range from Grade 0-6 and plans are underway to extend the curriculum to Grade 7 next academic year 2018. The school have 9 teaching staff and two Female volunteer cooks. The enrolment is currently standing at 283 learners (124 girls and 159 boys), from the *previously marginalised and vulnerable communities of the "Great Kunene Region"*.

Along with their teachers the learners visited Swakopmund, Walvisbay, Heroes Acre and Parliament in Windhoek as well as other well-known sites such as the Independence Museum. During the tour at Parliament the learners and accompanying teachers were received by the Hon

Speaker. He addressed them on the importance of education in the Chamber where members of parliament discuss national legislation. The visiting delegation were guided by the National Assembly's Public Relations Officer, Mr. David Nahogandja, who gave them an insight into Parliamentary business in the chamber, seating arrangement and the role of the Speaker, among other things.

This was a very important opportunity for these learners and their teachers as the visit coincided with the passing of the Late Angelika Muharukua, the former Governor of Kunene Region. The Hon. Speaker showed them where the late Muharukua used to seat during her service as a Member of Parliament. It was at this point that the learners paid a special tribute to the memory of the former Governor by singing two songs. One of those songs was titled "Take my hand, O Lord, am your child and have mercy on me and forgive me my sins".