

**3 September 2020**

**For immediate release**

**Windhoek**

**Joint statement between NSA, UNECA, GRID3, ESRI, GPSDD:  
Namibia aims to curb COVID-19 with the help of data and digital  
innovation**

*The Namibian Government is launching an interactive COVID-19 data hub to generate and display timely, accurate population and infrastructure data that supports the government's response and prevention measures. The hub also visualises health risks such as diabetes and heart disease by region, comparative COVID-19 risk, and general demographics.*

Windhoek, Namibia, 3 September, 2020 — To ensure that Namibians are protected from COVID-19 and further strengthen the country's health system, the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) together with the Ministry of Health and Social Services, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), Global Partner for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) and GRID3 are spearheading a new partnership that puts real-time COVID-19 and health data at the fingertips of decision-makers and the general public alike. The information will aid high risk groups and help identify the most effective COVID-19 prevention and response policies.

In an effort to make the crucial geospatial data available universally, findings are openly accessible on the hub, which allows for easy interaction and interpretation for experts and users new to the field of data. The interactive online repository was produced in collaboration with GRID3 and Esri, supported by GPSDD and UNECA. It is the most recent addition to GRID3's ever-increasing digital visualisation suite, which highlights COVID-19 incidence, prevalence, and other key geospatial data in numerous Sub-Saharan African countries.

"At the Namibia Statistics Agency we are firmly committed to decision-making that is based on accurate and timely data. The new COVID-19 hub is anchored in this philosophy and we are excited to embark on this path together with our partners at GRID3 and Esri, building on our initial collaboration with GPSDD and UNECA. We all together must ensure the most effective use of data to continue to swiftly control the pandemic while providing transparent and high-quality information to all Namibians," says Tulimegameno Amutenya, Manager of Data Processing at NSA.

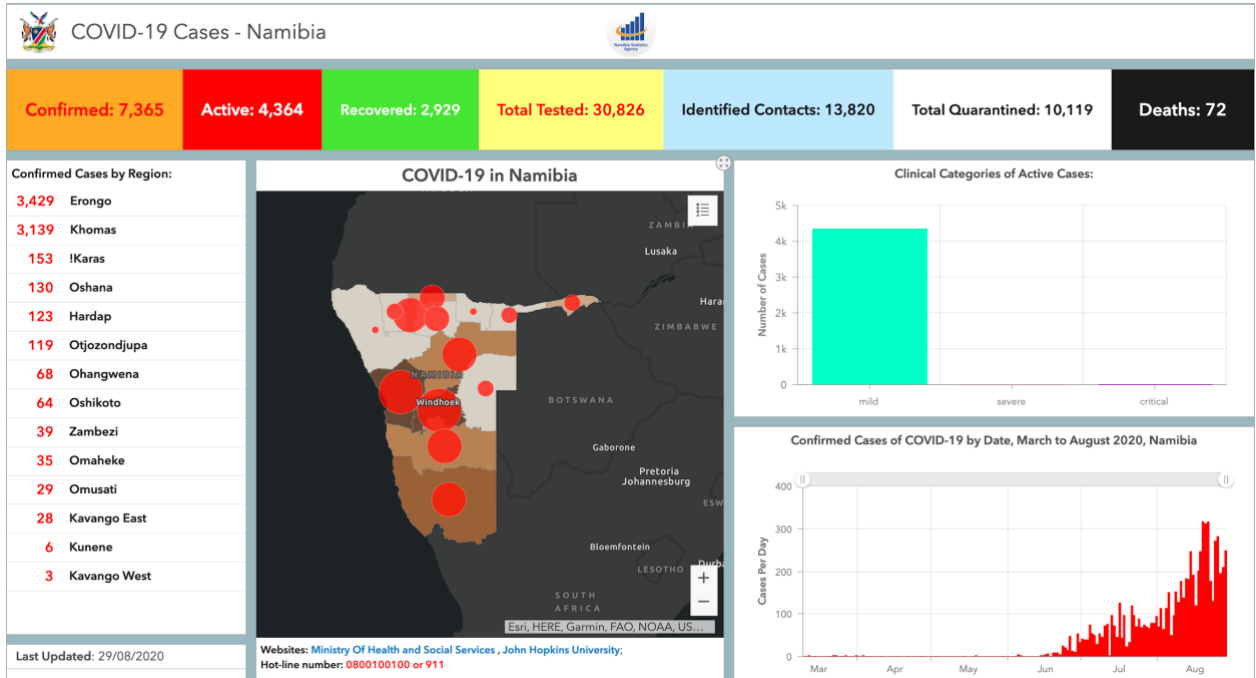
In the same vein, the Statistician General of the NSA, Mr. Alex Shimuafeni highlighted how the platform came at the right time, when the nation looks to the NSA for quality statistics on the economy and social wellbeing of its citizens. “When the Government of Namibia through the Head of State, His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob first called for a lockdown early this year due to Covid-19, future economic hardships and challenges were clearly inevitable. The question was more on how we as a country could monitor its outcomes and all other social challenges it would bring. There were calls from the public for a one stop shop, that allows for the monitoring of effects of Covid. Well, here we are”

In addition to COVID-19 case numbers, recoveries, and death toll, the site features data on the health risks that can make COVID-19 particularly dangerous. The location of people suffering from ailments like diabetes, heart conditions, respiratory illnesses, or cancer are comprehensively mapped and can be analysed and combined with other exacerbating characteristics like population density and access to information technology. This allows the user to obtain a comprehensive overview of health risks in the country.

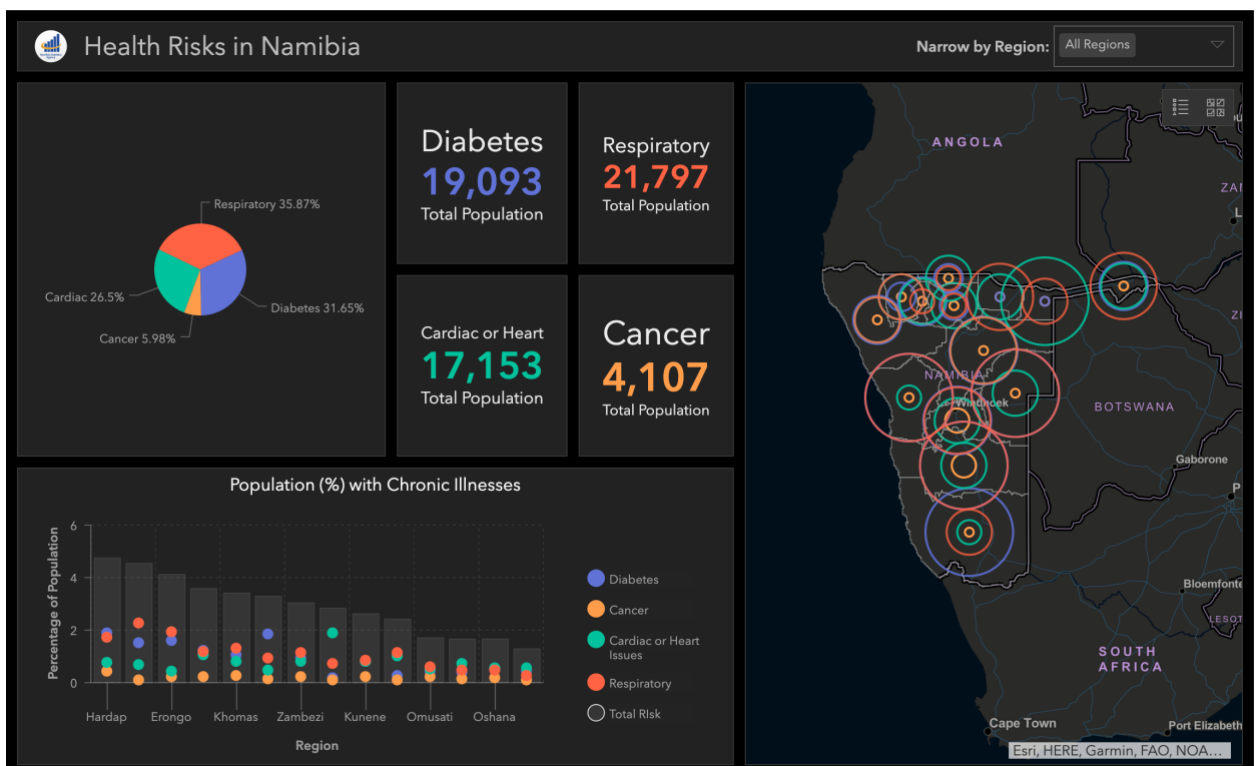
“The level of professionalism, expertise and open-mindedness towards new approaches displayed by the Namibian Government, NSA, and MoHSS made it possible to carry out this important endeavor. Together with our partners at Esri, GPSDD, and UNECA, it is our goal to facilitate data-based solutions that can alleviate the pandemic and contribute to strengthening health systems in the medium and long term,” adds Justine Dowden, GRID3’s country lead for Namibia.

The release of the COVID-19 hub marks the first major output of the strategic partnership between the Government of Namibia and GRID3, in collaboration with Esri. All sides are now looking to strengthen the partnership and accelerate efforts that would ensure the steady availability of up-to-date data for the country’s government and population.

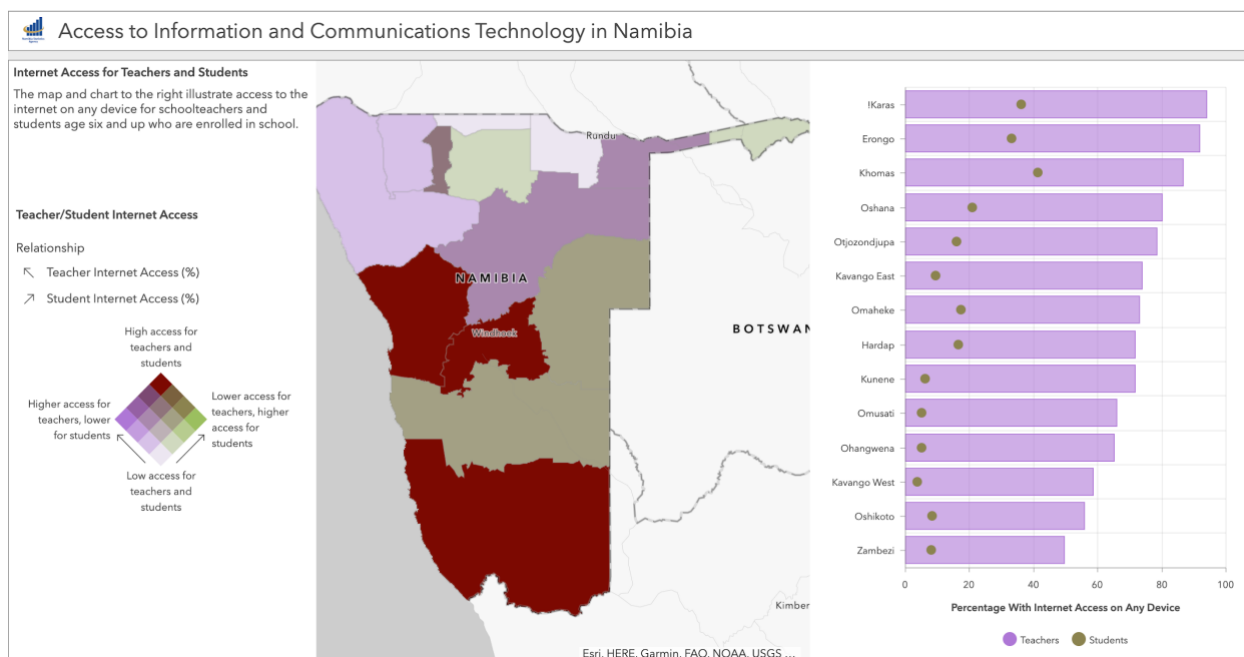
## Visual examples of the Namibia COVID-19 hub



*Dashboard created by MoHSS that tracks COVID-19 cases and outcomes*



*Dashboard featured on hub demonstrating prevalence of health risks by region*



*Dashboard featured on hub demonstrating access to ICT for teachers and students by region*

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## About the partners

### About Namibia’s Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS)

MoHSS’ mission is to provide integrated, affordable, and accessible quality health care and social services responsive to the needs of the population. Their core programmatic areas are public health, clinical health care services, health system management and planning, disability prevention and rehabilitation, and developmental social welfare services.

## **About Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA)**

Established in 2011, the NSA leverages partnerships and innovative technologies to produce and disseminate relevant, quality, and timely statistics and spatial data that are fit-for-purpose in accordance with international standards and best practices. NSA is instrumental in providing statistics intended for evidence-based planning and decision-making, policy design, and monitoring and evaluation.

## **About GRID3**

GRID3 (Geo-Referenced Infrastructure and Demographic Data for Development) works with countries to generate, validate and use geospatial data on population, settlements, infrastructure, and boundaries. It is implemented by Columbia University's Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), WorldPop at the University of Southampton, and the Flowminder Foundation.

## **About Esri**

Esri, the global market leader in geographic information system (GIS) software, location intelligence, and mapping, offers the most powerful geospatial cloud available, to help customers unlock the full potential of data to improve operational and business results. Founded in 1969, Esri software is deployed in more than 350,000 organizations including 90 of the Fortune 100 companies, all 50 state governments, more than half of all counties (large and small), and 87 of the Forbes Top 100 Colleges in the U.S., as well as all 15 Executive Departments of the U.S. Government and dozens of independent agencies. With its pioneering commitment to geospatial information technology, Esri engineers the most advanced solutions for digital transformation, the Internet of Things (IoT), and advanced analytics.

## **About the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data**

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) is a global network including governments, businesses, and civil society organizations working around the world to harness the data revolution for sustainable development. Since it was created in 2015, the Global Partnership has elevated data issues at a political level, launched a multi-million-dollar Collaborative Data Innovations for Sustainable Development funding initiative, and supported the advancement of country-led Data Roadmaps for Sustainable Development.

## **About the UN Economic Commission for Africa**

Established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations (UN) in 1958 as one of the UN's five regional commissions, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's (ECA's) mandate is to promote the economic and social development of its member states, foster intraregional integration and promote

# Media Release



international cooperation for Africa's development. ECA is made up of 54 member states and plays a dual role as a regional arm of the UN and as a key component of the African institutional landscape.

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