

# No budget for Unam southern campus project

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THE first construction phase of the University of Namibia (Unam) southern campus at Keetmanshoop is yet to be completed due to budgetary constraints, some four years after it was started.

No budgetary provision was made in the current medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) budget for the construction, which was stopped in April 2018.

The //Kharas regional council's chief regional officer, Beatus Kasete, made this revelation at a stakeholders' engagement meeting at Keetmanshoop last week.

He said there was no budgetary allocation from this financial year until 2021/22 for the southern campus' construction works.

"The zero allocation is worrisome and unacceptable," he stated, adding that the budgetary allocation was only made for the construction of the new vocational training centre (VTC) building, as well as for the upgrading and renovation works at the old Luderitz power station.

Kasete proposed that funds allocated for the new VTC building be diverted to com-

plete the southern campus' first phase. Unam vice chancellor Kenneth Matengu acknowledged that the institution does not have funds to complete the construction of the building, citing the financial constraints caused by the current economic situation in the country.

"If we can hold hands, we can complete the construction," Matengu told the stakeholders.

Responding to proposals that other stakeholders must come on board to help fund the construction of the building, Kasete stressed that it was the higher education ministry's responsibility to budget for the southern campus' infrastructure.

"The government must take the first step to release the funds for the construction before other stakeholders come on board," he said.

Keetmanshoop mayor Gaudentia Kröhne pledged political will on behalf of the regional and local leadership to try to persuade the government to allocate funds for the completion of the southern campus' project.

In response, Matengu remarked "because of your compelling interest, it is your

voice that matters".

The southern campus' assistant pro-vice chancellor, Eroid Naomab, described the meeting as a first engagement to understand the institution's resources allocation.

He informed the stakeholders that the campus relies on government and public support to complete the construction of the building.

The meeting resolved that the //Kharas regional and local leaders should lobby the central government to release funds for the completion of the project.

The first phase of the campus will house four lecture halls, four geoscience laboratories, one classroom, administration offices, a disability access ramp, concourse, lecturers' offices, a boardroom, ablution facilities and study areas.

The construction of the first phase is expected to cost the university over N\$80 million, and was set for completion in September 2018.

The government had awarded Babyface Civils and China Jiangxi International the tender for the Unam southern campus construction project.

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**INCOMPLETE** ... The incomplete Unam southern campus building at Keetmanshoop.