

Dear Jan and Rena

I hope and trust you are well. Just a quick feedback. Things are moving slowly – not always sure in which direction, but hoping it is in the right one. The board constantly asks the same question you asked: ‘Can you predict with some confidence that you will be back afloat by September?’ and I honestly can’t answer. I can only share the following with them (and with you):

Since my last email, we have organized last week a huge event – to celebrate our photo project ‘the caring Namibian man’ that turned 20, we organized a retrospective exhibition at the FNCC. We were honoured to have H.E the First Gentleman opening it. It did bring quite a lot of high-profile guests, including the Minister for Information, Communication and Technology and various ambassadors. We are using it as a fundraising – we are auctioning photos (silent auction) so hope to get some donations at the end of the month.

The event was the opportunity to meet with the new British High Commissioner. He was impressed, and I was invited for coffee on Friday 13th. and he reiterated that he would very much like to support OYO. However, they don’t have funding this year so he will be on the lookout for funds he may be able to access (he is new in Namibia – he arrived 2 months ago) and he will try by all means to have projects with us. However, at this stage, he can’t promise when nor how much. So the door is not closed – it’s just not for now.

Regarding the other proposals:

- **Finnish Embassy:** our concept note passed the first stage and we were invited to complete the full application, which was sent today. Obviously only the best applications were kept for the second round, so competition is probably quite fierce. On the positive side, the Embassy appreciates the work OYO does, they trust our finances and they know we deliver. On the negative side, they sometimes prefer to get new partners, to avoid being criticized for favoritism.
- **German Embassy:** there is a genuine wish from the embassy to help OYO, and they asked me to be ready with a proposal (on a topic and with activities they want to support) for when they get their funding. The proposal is ready and meets all their criteria. It can be sent anytime. However, there is neither an indication on when they will get funding (they hope end August) nor on the amount of funding they will get. (Hoping that unlike the British they will not redirect everything to defence).
- **Interteam:** it is a new partner. According to the local director, there is a good 80 to 90% chance to application will be approved, as the whole team loves the concept and we had good support from them with the writing of the proposal. This project only starts in January however.
- **EU Spaces of Culture:** again, according to the EU delegation we have a good chance because 1) the application is strong and 2) we have proposed a strong partnership with the EU delegation, two local EU structures (the Franco-Namibian Cultural Centre and the Goethe Institute) and two structures abroad (the Camoes Centre in Angola and the Alliance Française in Botswana) and 3) Namibia has never received this funding before. But ultimately a jury in Brussels will take the final decision, so we can’t be sure.
- We also applied to the Canadian Fund for Local Initiative – it’s very competitive, but we gave it a try.
- Other proposals are more standard – and we are one among many applying – so the outcome is more difficult to foresee. The one with the Exeter University is a massive project of which OYO is a small part. They are confident they will get it, but I have never been part of such a large consortium before so I don’t know what are our chances.

The EU/ Goethe Institute SA call is not out yet – so keeping an eye for it still. We have negotiated two very small grants with UNDP (support to their conference end June for Euro 2,500) and the EU (management of the Youth Day for Euro 2,750). They represent actually a lot of work for very small amounts of money, but we don't have much of a choice. We are also trying to apply to some corporates to join our project 'the little prince' at the NTN in August.

June/ July and August will still be very difficult – we still don't have enough money for salaries and overheads – so administratively we are struggling. We are quite hopeful some applications will come back positive – I really cross my fingers for the Finnish, Interteam and EU Spaces of Culture as there was a genuine interest to help OYO get those grants and I received a lot of support when preparing them – but of course we have to wait.

So here we are – I stress more than the board – probably because I sit with the invoices and salaries and see we can't pay them all – but we all try to keep moving. The board has helped approach three corporates to support 'the little prince' so fingers crossed.