

# Cardiff University project to deliver £7.2m PPE from Wales to Namibia

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Professor Judith Hall, lead of the Phoenix Project, with Cardiff University Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Riordan

A Cardiff University project is to deliver vital PPE equipment to Namibia to help tackle a devastating third surge of COVID-19 in the country.

More than £7m worth of clinical equipment, including masks, gowns and hand sanitizer which is not needed by the NHS in Wales is being donated via the Phoenix Project. A further £500,000 grant is being given for oxygen equipment and nurse training.

The Phoenix Project is a partnership between Cardiff University and the University of Namibia working to reduce poverty and promote health and a sustainable environment.

Professor Judith Hall, from Cardiff University’s School of Medicine and lead of the Phoenix Project, made a personal plea to the Welsh First Minister to help the country, which has the worst COVID fatality rate in Africa and is in “extreme need”.

“I phoned Mark Drakeford and asked: ‘What can the people of Wales do to help?’” said Professor Hall.

“I asked for a donation of PPE from the Welsh Government – and sent him a list of the hundreds of thousands of items the Namibians desperately need to fight COVID. They came back with an incredible donation of millions of pieces of PPE, worth \$150

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## People



**Professor Judith Hall**

Professor of Anaesthetics, Intensive Care and Pain Medicine. Phoenix Project Lead

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supply chains here in Wales, so we are able to offer much-needed support to our partners in southern Africa.

“The Phoenix Project is delighted to be delivering the PPE donation and managing the oxygen grant on behalf of the Welsh Government.”

The kit includes more than 1.1m face masks, 500,000 gowns, 100,000 protective aprons and more than £1m worth of hand sanitizer. Wales is also offering a grant of £500,000 for essential oxygen equipment and nurse training through the Welsh Government’s Wales and Africa programme.

Cardiff University Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Riordan and High Commissioner for Namibia to the UK Linda Scott attended a meeting to hand over the clinical equipment for transportation on Tuesday. It will be shipped next week, with the containers arriving in Namibia 20 days later.

Professor Riordan said: “Cardiff University has made a commitment to our relationship with the University of Namibia for the long term. The funding we have made available over the last seven years has borne fruit in a wide range of significant ways. In the last year alone, the project has attracted over £8m of external funding, enabling the sustainable improvement of lives in both Africa and Wales. This is a huge achievement during a pandemic.

“I am delighted that this project lies at the heart of our Civic Mission, and I want to see the Phoenix Project continue to go from strength to strength, working closely with the Welsh Government’s ambitions as a global nation and in accordance with the Future Generations Act.”



Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford and Professor Colin Riordan

Professor Kenneth Matengu from the University of Namibia also met with Mr Drakeford in June. In the meeting Professor Matengu gave a moving account of the dreadful situation in Namibia, with university staff dying daily and the hospitals overwhelmed.

Mr Drakeford said: “I have heard directly from Namibia on the extremely difficult situation that they face in the battle against COVID-19. We have a duty to help those in need and I’m proud

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Professor Matengu said: “At this moment we need our international friends to stand up with us against the flow of this pandemic and Wales has been our constant partner for seven years. Through the first minister and this aid from the people of Wales, we will be more resilient in our immediate and longer-term responses to disease. The vice president has had a phone call with the Welsh first minister to express his heartfelt thanks.”

Namibian High Commissioner Linda Scott said: “Having been through a devastating few years for our economy and health system due to the impact of climate change and now COVID, we are deeply grateful to the people of Wales for this donation. It will allow health workers to feel supported as they work to save lives. It will also allow those in rural areas to know that they are considered important. Thank you, Wales.”

These developments follow a Welsh Government grant of £125,000 earlier this year given to the Phoenix Project to promote awareness of the need for coronavirus vaccinations in Namibia. This earlier grant targeted vaccination for the most disadvantaged of Namibia’s people including the disabled, elderly and frail and those living in remote parts of the country.

The Phoenix Project has worked with Namibia for seven years, leading and managing more than 52 different projects in the country.

More information about the project can be found here:

<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/phoenix-project>



Professor Hall, Mr Drakeford, Namibian High Commissioner Linda Scott and Professor Riordan

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