

Let me share an upsetting example. As I mentioned earlier, I recently attended the WHO First International Conference on “Task Shifting” in Addis Ababa where I received several important documents containing Global Recommendations and Guidelines which I as a Minister was expected to endorse. I vehemently objected to the fact that we were expected to endorse such strategic and policy documents, but which I had only just received upon my arrival at the Conference. To my surprise, I was informed that some of my officials were part of the preparatory committee and it was taken for granted that they would have briefed us before we left for Addis Ababa. Colleagues do you believe this is the way we should deal with each other? It was embarrassing and disappointing when on further enquiry I learned that indeed some of you and your officials were there at the Conference!! I would like to believe that this was not deliberate but rather an oversight. But given the repetitive nature of poor communication within the Ministry, I am tempted to conclude that this requires serious attention by all of us. Another disappointing example was the recruitment of some people who no longer work for the Ministry to deliver statements on behalf of the Ministry without consultation of our Office. This is unacceptable, and unprofessional.

I am also aware of similar negative reports from medical interns in the Windhoek hospitals who, when they have reached their credit limits had to use their personal mobile phones to call medical officers for support on medical emergencies. I personally had encountered a similar problem whilst overseas where I had reached my credit limit and could therefore not make calls.

For medical interns not to be able to make a call to a supervisor is potentially life threatening and in general make our staff at operational level wonder whether the Ministry is serious about its mission. The problem I am informed is that those responsible for setting /allocating credit limits do so arbitrarily without due regard to the fact that interns need to be able to make and receive calls at all times. Some of these calls

could live saving calls. Once again, I remind you that people's lives are literally in our hands.