

100 DAYS, 100 REASONS WHY VERONICA JANSEN-WEBSTER



Dear Citizens of St. Maarten,

It is with great pride and a sense of responsibility that I present to you the accomplishments of the Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor during the first 100 days of my tenure. The first 100 days can be characterized by active engagement with key stakeholders, significant progress in healthcare and mental health initiatives, and a strong commitment to upholding labor rights. Our team has worked tirelessly to address the pressing needs of our community and to lay the foundation for long-term improvements. This report highlights our key achievements and outlines our ongoing commitment to serving the people of St. Maarten.

Sincerely,

Minister Veronica Jansen-Webster

Minister of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

In her first month in office, Minister Jansen-Webster organized a workshop with all the departments under the Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor.

The goal was for these departments to come together and evaluate their most urgent needs and activities. This collaborative effort helped prioritize

and address the most critical tasks effectively.

Additionally, Minister Jansen-Webster had the opportunity to act as Minister of Public Housing, Spatial planning, Environment and Infrastructure (VROMI) and continue to the work of the ministry from June 25th, 2024, until Minister Patrice Gumbs was able

to transition from Minister of Plenipotentiary to Minister of VROMI. Through these diverse and dedicated efforts, Minister Jansen-Webster has demonstrated her strong commitment to enhancing the quality of life, fostering resilience, and building a supportive and thriving community.

HEALTHCARE INITIATIVES



STRENGTHENING THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM AND SERVICES

Minister Jansen-Webster and her Cabinet secured the counterpart funds for Mental health Facility project to ensure the complete construction of the new facility continues based on World Bank requirements.

ENSURING WATER SECURITY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Securing a consistent and clean water supply to protect the health and wellbeing of our communities and rapid developments. Minister Jansen-Webster ensured a stable water supply amid the construction surge in Cole Bay and Cupecoy.

ENHANCING PATIENT EXPERIENCE AND OVERSEAS MEDICAL TREATMENT PROCEDURES

Minister Jansen-Webster accompanied by her Cabinet and SZV conducted a site visit to Clínica de Occidente and Fundacion Valle del Lili Hospital in Cali, Colombia, where several key issues affecting patient experiences were identified.



COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

Minister Jansen-Webster has committed to establishing a committee for quality assurance to address the concerns of St. Maarten patients referred to hospitals in Colombia.

CONTINUED PROGRESS OF THE ST. MAARTEN HOSPITAL

Minister Veronica Jansen-Webster has prioritized open and consistent communication with the staff and stakeholders involved in the development of the new hospital.

SUSTAINABLE AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE ACT (SAAHA)

Ensuring the continuity and implementation of the National Ordinance regulating sustainable affordable access to health, care, and wellness.

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- **TRANSITIONING SHELTER SERVICES TO VULNERABLE SENIOR RESIDENTS:** In response to significant budget cuts, one of Minister Jansen-Webster's goal was to balance the financial responsibility of the Ministry with compassionate support for the elderly and families in need, as government downscale the Transitional Shelter program (established after Hurricane Irma).
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH "MEET THE MINISTER":** The Minister of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor launched the "Meet the Minister" program to enhance direct communication with citizens.
- **COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY WELL-BEING:** Minister Jansen-Webster was deeply involved in a variety of impactful and meaningful activities. She dedicated herself to supporting vulnerable groups, including foster children and displaced youth, by actively engaging in initiatives designed to enhance their well-being and stability.

LABOR INITIATIVES



- **ENHANCING SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND REPRESENTATION:** Ensuring compliance with international labor standards and promoting fair representation, Minister Jansen-Webster traveled to Geneva to address a complex issue concerning the nomination of members to the Social Economic Council (SER)
- **RESOLUTION OF MINIMUM WAGE DISCREPANCIES FOR ACCURATE TAX TABLE ESTABLISHMENT:** In the past 100 days, an issue was discovered with setting tax tables for 2023 and 2024 due to conflicting minimum wage rates. The official minimum wage is currently NAf 9.62, which is lower than the NAf 9.95 and NAf 10.40 rates set for these years. This mismatch complicates tax table creation and poses legal risks.
- **RAPID RESPONSE APPROVAL AND PROCESSING OF WORK PERMITS:** During Minister Jansen-Webster's first 100 days in office, she prioritized addressing the backlog of pending work permits, some of which had been awaiting approval since May 2023.

CHALLENGES

Since taking office on May 3, 2024, the Minister has faced major budget cuts that have significantly impacted the Ministry. These cuts, which were substantial compared to the previous year, led to the scaling back of key programs, such as the Transitional Shelter Program and caused delays or halts in other important projects. To address these challenges, the Ministry reallocated funds to priority areas, implemented cost-saving measures, and communicated with stakeholders about the effects of the budget cuts. The Minister is now working to secure additional funding and make strategic adjustments to maintain essential services despite the reduced budget.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

- **SMMC:** During her first 100 days in office, Minister Jansen-Webster made several visits to the St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) to oversee the development of the new St. Maarten General Hospital. Through detailed presentations and on-site tours, she closely monitored the project's progress, ensuring it meets the island's healthcare needs with state-of-the-art facilities. During one of these visits, she discovered that Carl & Son's Unique Bakery, a beloved local business, had established a concession within the hospital, enhancing the environment for patients, staff, and visitors. Her hands-on involvement and support for local enterprise reflect her commitment to both healthcare excellence and community engagement.
- **SLS:** On July 5th, 2024, during her first 100 days in office, the Honorable Minister Veronica Jansen-Webster visited the St. Maarten Laboratory Services (SLS) for an in-depth briefing. This visit, after a previously demanding schedule, marked a focused effort to engage with key departments under her ministry. During her meeting with Dr. Cherina Fleming, Director of SLS, and senior staff, the Minister learned about the lab's critical role in the community, including its network of phlebotomy centers and partnerships with external laboratories. A key highlight was SLS's recent accreditation, making it the only lab in the Caribbean Dutch territories to achieve such a prestigious standard. After touring the facility and meeting the staff, Minister Jansen-Webster expressed her admiration for SLS's high standards and reaffirmed her commitment to supporting their ongoing contributions to public health.
- **SZV:** The Honorable Minister Veronica Jansen-Webster has been actively engaged in enhancing healthcare services through several visits and meetings with the Social & Health Insurance SZV. Her first visit on May 13th, 2024, involved a collaborative meeting with SZV leadership, including Mr. Glen Carty and board chairman Mr. Perry Wilson. The discussions focused on SZV's daily operations, the use of the SZV portal, and challenges related to sending patients abroad for treatment. This initial meeting set the stage for ongoing dialogue, allowing Minister Jansen-Webster to gain valuable insights into SZV's role and operations. She expressed strong support for SZV's initiatives and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration to improve healthcare services and address community needs effectively.
- **MHF:** Minister of VSA, Ms. Veronica Jansen-Webster, had a highly productive and insightful period, with significant engagements focused on advancing the Mental Health Project. The Minister held crucial virtual meetings with the National Recovery Program Bureau (NRPB) and the World Bank, where the Minister received comprehensive updates on the prog-

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ress and next steps essential for the project’s successful implementation. These discussions played a pivotal role in setting the strategic direction for future initiatives aimed at enhancing mental health services on the island. Minister Jansen-Webster, alongside the Minister of Finance, Ms. Marinka Gumbs, participated in an in-depth tour of the current Mental Health facility. Guided by the Mental Health Director and the dedicated staff, the tour provided the Ministers with important insights into the current state of mental health services and emphasized the critical need for continued focus and investment in this area. The Minister looks forward to further collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure the successful advancement of mental health initiatives that will benefit the entire community.

• **TURNING POINT FOUNDATION:** The Minister and her Cabinet staff met with Turning Point to address key issues and strengthen collaboration between the Ministry of VSA and the institution. Turning Point raised concerns about the lack of inclusion of drug addiction in the national mental health policy, unresolved subsidy applications, and their strong opposition to the potential legalization of cannabis. The Minister further discussed with Turning Point, the importance of involving them in policy decisions. The session concluded with a tour of the facilities, taking a step toward enhanced communication and future cooperation.

• **WIEMS:** On June 2nd, 2024, the Windward Islands Emergency Medical Services (WIEMS) held a graduation ceremony for 25 Emergency Medical Technicians – B (EMT-B), including one from Anguilla. This event marked a key milestone in advancing emergency medical care in Sint Maarten. Distinguished guests, including Mrs. Doreen Gumbs-Vines from Global Medical Educational Training, supported the graduates, who were recognized for their commitment and achievement. The ceremony also saw the retirement announcement of Paramedic Mr. Robert Powell, who has significantly contributed to EMT training. The Honorable Minister of VSA, Mrs. Veronica Jansen-Webster, attended and delivered a speech encouraging the graduates to apply their skills with dedication and excellence.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

1. Inter-nation Labor Organization’s Decent Work Team and office for the Caribbean.
2. Seven Seas Water Group.
3. Mental Health Foundation.
4. National Recovery Program Bureau.
5. World Bank.
6. Valle del Lille Hospital
7. SZV Social and Health Insurances

ONGOING AND FUTURE PROJECTS

1. Health Sector

- Construction of the St. Maarten Hospital.
- Committee for Quality Insurance for referral patients of St. Maarten.
- Sustainable Affordable Access to Healthcare Act.

2. Social Development

- Transitional Shelter Home.
- Legal Help Desk

3. Labor Market

- Continuous and effective dialogue between Government, Employer and Employees



Minister Veronica Jansen-Webster’s first 100 days in office have been marked by decisive action, strategic vision, and an unwavering commitment to continuity and progress. From the moment she took on her role, she ensured that the momentum of ongoing initiatives was not only maintained but accelerated, reflecting her deep understanding of the importance of building on the foundations laid by her predecessors. Her focus on continuity has allowed her to seamlessly integrate her own innovative ideas with the existing priorities, ensuring that no critical project was left behind.

In healthcare, social development, and labor, Minister Jansen-Webster has demonstrated her ability to address urgent needs while also planning for the future. Her leadership in advancing sustainable healthcare, supporting vulnerable populations, and enhancing labor relations has already begun to transform these vital areas, laying the groundwork for long-term benefits to the community. As we approach the snap elections, it’s clear that Minister Jansen-Webster’s focus on continuity, combined with her proactive and compassionate leadership, makes her an essential figure in government. By voting to keep her in office, the people of Sint Maarten can ensure that the progress made so far will continue, leading to even greater improvements in the quality of life for all. Her dedication to continuity, her proven ability to drive positive change, and her unwavering commitment to the community are compelling reasons to vote for Veronica Jansen-Webster and keep her at the helm, guiding Sint Maarten toward a brighter, more prosperous future.

