

## DID YOU KNOW?

The commemoration of Youth Month this year marks the 37th anniversary of the 16 June Soweto uprising. Substance abuse is receiving our highest response through the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Substance Abuse, which has proposed legislative reforms such as the banning of alcohol advertisements, increasing the age of alcohol consumption and zero-tolerance for drunk-driving. Government and its partners are implementing the Anti-Substance National Plan of Action and National Drug Master Plan, which are part of our collective effort towards a South Africa that is free of drug abuse.



# MY DISTRICT TODAY

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## RELEASING THE POTENTIAL OF OUR YOUNG NATION

### FROM THE CEO'S DESK

GCIS

The events of June 16, 1976 when thousands of young people took to the streets of Soweto in defiance of the apartheid regime, is one of the defining moments of our journey to democracy, equality and freedom. The protesters' courage inspired countless others all over the country and before long the uprising spread, forever changing the socio-political landscape in South Africa.

During Youth Month we again reflect on and commemorate the sacrifices made by the youth of 1976, who were willing to lay down their lives in the fight against apartheid. We do so cognisant that the youth of today face a very different challenge. Our common struggle now is to defeat the scourge of substance abuse and to provide quality education and economic opportunities so that this generation can overcome the triple threat of poverty, inequality and unemployment. The vision for our youth is captured in the theme of Youth Month: "Working Together for Youth Development and a Drug-Free South Africa."

The haunting reality of substance abuse was brought to life recently when President Jacob Zuma visited Eldorado Park in response to the desperate pleas of mothers in that community. President Zuma heard their stories and instructed law enforcement agencies to step up their anti-drug and substance abuse operations in this area.

Government's decisive action in Eldorado Park has seen a major clampdown on drug dens and the arrest of known drug lords. However, the fight is far from over, and we know the situation in Eldorado Park is symptomatic of similar issues facing communities throughout the country.

We hope that our successes in Eldorado Park will reinforce

the notion that a drug free society can be achieved if communities stand together. Government will focus on the fight against substance abuse in public participation sessions during Imbizo Focus Week from 11 June to next Monday 18 June. This is an opportunity for communities and role players to join the fight against substance abuse and make their voices heard.

The second pillar of our Youth Month theme is youth development. This entails providing young people with quality education and opportunities to enter the job market. The battle for economic emancipation is every bit as daunting as the fight against apartheid by the youth of 1976.

Globally there is a youth employment crisis; young people are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults.

Speaking at the Japan International Co-operation Agency seminar, President Jacob Zuma shared South Africa's experience within the context of global youth unemployment. He said: "The South African economic legacy lies in the distorted pattern of ownership and economic exclusion created by apartheid policies and, as such, the effects of decades of racial exclusion are still evident in both employment levels and income differentials.

To address the above challenges, Government, along with our social partners, continues to work hard to implement policies that have a potential to transform the South African economy, including reducing high levels of inequality, creating decent jobs, and reducing the concentration of economic ownership to a small section of our society."

Giving life to the vision President Zuma pointed to the

National Development Plan (NDP), the New Growth Path (NGP) and 18 integrated Strategic Infrastructure Programmes (SIPs) that will lay the base for higher growth, inclusivity and job creation.

Youth feature prominently in the NDP - our blueprint to take us beyond the constraints of the present by tackling long-term structural and economic challenges over the next twenty to thirty years.

The New Growth Path is the vehicle that will concretise the longer term vision of the NDP by harnessing areas in the economy that have the potential for creating employment on a large scale. These are infrastructure, the agricultural value chain, the mining value chain, the green economy, manufacturing sectors, tourism and certain other high-level service sectors.

Tying it all together are the 18 integrated SIPs, encompassing more than 645 projects across the country. So far, 15 strategic SIPs have been launched, and thousands of new jobs have been created.

In Japan President Zuma also spoke of the need for partnership in addressing the challenges of youth unemployment. "We recently negotiated a Youth Accord between government, business, labour, civil society and youth organisations. This will go a long way in addressing our challenges," he said.

Government is committed to grow the economy and create jobs to assist our youth in overcoming the triple threat of poverty, inequality and unemployment. The spirit of partnership is crucial if we are to address our shared challenges. We urge South Africans to support government, business and labour as together we strive to build a better life for all.

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## Outcome 1: Improved quality of basic education

### Inculcating a culture of volunteerism

GCIS: Free State

In a bid to achieve on 85% pass rate in 2013, the Free State Department of Education MEC, Tate Makgoe, initiated a volunteer programme for officials to help struggling schools to reach the target.

MEC Makgoe met with volunteers to decide how they could help struggling schools to improve their results. The volunteers offered to help with counselling, motivation, teaching, sports and in any other way they could.

Explaining the purpose of this programme, Makgoe says the intention is to offer learners support without replacing existing staff, but working with their cooperation to improve scholastic performance.

“This can include fixing IT equipment, book-keeping and financial management, and assisting in matters relating to the curriculum especially mathematics and science.

Retired official, Nobandile Yose, who served the department for 40 years, heeded Makgoe’s call and pledged to offer counselling and support to learners from disadvantaged communities.

“I believe most learners need emotional support. I will offer my time to listen to their challenges,” says Yose. She already started paying the registration fee for a financially needy student studying Chemistry at the University of the Free State.

“Many learners can reach their dreams if only they get the right support,” Yose says.

Another volunteer, Elana van der Merwe, subject advisor in the Xhariep district and part-time lecturer at the University of the Free State, is passionate about community development.

She has already started volunteering at Dr Blok High School in Heidedal, Bloemfontein, by giving extra lessons on Saturdays and providing administrative support.

There are about 43 volunteers who signed up for the programme.

Speaking during the first meeting, Makgoe urged volunteers to use their spare time to lend a helping hand in the delivery of quality education. He also called for more officials to sign up for the programme.

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Presenters from LoveLife speaking on the value of life and the importance of looking after one another.



## Outcome 12: An efficient, effective and development-oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenry

### Bitou says no to substance abuse

*GCIS: Western Cape*

As part of International Children's Day on 01 June 2013, Bitou Municipality, along with GCIS, SAPS, the Department of Basic Education, Social Development and Love Life held a successful anti-substance abuse campaign at the Piesang Valley hall.

The 10 primary schools within the Bitou municipal area each nominated 15 pupils and their parents to take part in this campaign, targeting 50 parents and 150 learners.

Participants said they believed that substance abuse was the main cause of gender-based violence and that it contributed to the high levels of crime and unemployment in the area.

The parents pledged to look out for abnormal behaviour and to become

involved in their children's activities. They were also urged to report any incidents of wrongdoing to the police or a social worker.

Government recognises that the problem of drug abuse is complex and requires decisive and collective national action. Government has therefore been at the forefront of fighting the scourge of substance abuse through various national initiatives and programmes such as during Youth Month, which has been dedicated to increasing awareness around substance abuse. As part of the campaign, Cabinet members will be interacting with various communities to discuss drug-related challenges further and to agree on a plan of action to address the problems.

The theme for this year's Youth Month is "Working together for youth development and a drug-free South Africa".



Many parents and learners attended talks during the substance abuse campaign.



**Martha Motabasinde is happy with the services she received at Mabatlane Thusong Service Centre.**

Another happy community member is John Molokomme from Mabatlane Extension 1. He says his life has changed for the better and he no longer has to travel long distances to get government services. "This Thusong has improved the lives of our communities. Most people around here are from poorer families and work on farms. The Department of Labour helps us to settle employment disputes, obtain unemployment benefits and advises us on labour rights.



## Outcome 12: An efficient, effective and development-oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenry

### Ten years of continuous service delivery

*Maria Ramoshaba: GCS Limpopo*

Mabatlane Thusong Service is celebrating a decade of non-stop service delivery. The centre was launched by the former Minister in the Presidency, Dr Essop Pahad and former Premier of Limpopo Advocate Ngoako Ramatlhodi in 2003 with only five service providers.

Now, 10 years later, the centre is benefiting communities of Mabatlane and Mogalakwena.



**John Molokomme is grateful for the speedy service at the centre.**

Some service providers said it was a privilege to work at Mabatlane Thusong Service Centre. They had been organising career exhibitions, bursaries and learnerships beneficiaries from their respective departments. Recently, the centre identified 10 youths from the surrounding villages and forwarded them to the local municipality for learnership assistance.

Previously, these communities had to travel 120 km to Modimolle to access government services.

Members of the community were delighted by this development. Martha Motabasinde from Mabatlane Extension 2 said, "I recently visited the centre to apply for a social grant and received the best service without any hassle.

Today, I can pay my children's school fees, uniforms and put food on the table."

The Thusong Service Centres (formerly Multi-Purpose Community Centres) programme was initiated in 1999 as one of the ways to implement development, communication and information and to integrate government services into rural communities.



**From left to right C Pilane Social Worker, J Mafora Municipal Admin Office, H Matlou CDW and T Lebodi**

Christina Pilane, social worker at the centre, said 10 early development centres in and around Mabatlane Village received subsidies from the Department of Social Development.

"Persons and households living with HIV and Aids receive continuous counselling from the centre. This is done through the assistance of CDWs based at the centre who identify poverty-stricken families and refer them to relevant stakeholders at the centre for intervention. Many community members have benefitted from programmes at the centre. People have realised that by working together they can improve people's lives who visit Mabatlane Thusong," she concluded.



Captain Maditsi and Jane Maphike spreading awareness of the need to report abuse.



Zakhele, a community member, talks about Government's stop rape campaign.



## Outcome 12: An efficient, effective and development-oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenry

### ***Say no to gender-based violence!***

*Tinyiko Molefe GCIS: Gauteng*

The Government Communication and Information Systems (GCIS) has embarked on a stop rape and gender-based violence campaign at Empilisweni informal settlement, Gauteng. The purpose of the campaign was to educate the community about the effects of rape in their community.

“In terms of the Domestic Violence Act, Sexual Offences Act and Children’s Act the police may arrest, prosecute and convict perpetrators of violence against women and children,” Captain Moabelo said. She also emphasised the role of the South African Police Service to protect the community and arrest perpetrators of violence and rape.

“The police may arrest any law breaker including those who rape and commit gender-based violence. I therefore plead with the community to report any form of abuse to the police so that we can protect and serve the community effectively,” Captain Moabelo said.

“The abuse of women and children has a negative effect on society. Hence, child abuse has a serious effect on children’s behaviour when they grow up. If the problem is not addressed in time, they may become abusers themselves once they become adults,” said Ernest, a social worker who works with women and children.

He emphasised the importance of taking care of children and ensuring that they are taken to places of safety such as day-care centres when the parents are at work to prevent them becoming easy targets of abuse.

“Government is doing a great job by reaching out to the community and providing education about gender-based violence and rape, because

an informed community leads to a safer community”, said Zakhele one of the community members. He applauded Government for taking the initiative to ensure that communities know what needs to be done when they are abused. He said it was important to educate children about abuse, since this would contribute to their safety.



Ernest interacting with the children to ensure that they get information about preventing rape or abuse against children.