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PRIORITY 1: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Business Fair boosts economic growth

By Khanyiso Seyisi: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

As part of an Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan initiative, the Umuziwabantu Local Municipality hosted a successful Business Fair on 19 October 2023, which attracted about 50 local informal businesses.

The Business Fair provided the opportunity for local businesses to display their products and services to potential customers, partners and investors. Exhibition stalls were set up at the Harding Corner Mall to allow easy access to the public. The event offered informal businesses an excellent platform to promote their brands, network with other industry players and explore potential business opportunities with the Umuziwabantu Local Municipality.

Umuziwabantu Mayor, Cllr Siboniso Zungu – together with the Deputy Mayor Cllr Nonhlanhla Luthuli, the Speaker, Cllr Patros Shebi and other councillors – officially opened the Business Fair. Members of the Harding Business Forum played a key role in the planning of this event.

In his speech, the Mayor said the Business Fair aimed to promote local businesses, provide a networking hub and bring together business owners, investors, government

officials and other stakeholders to foster partnerships and collaborations. According to him, attracting much-needed investments to Harding will lead to job creation and improve the standard of living for residents of this town.

“The municipality intends organising capacity-building and training workshops and seminars to equip entrepreneurs with valuable skills and knowledge to improve their business skills and adapt to changing market trends,” the Mayor added. Cllr Zungu also added that the Business Fair had attracted attendees and participants from various wards and even external visitors, giving local businesses the chance to explore new markets and potential customers.

An engagement session with big businesses and corporate companies was held at the Harding Bowling Club to share expertise and investment strategies that will ensure economic growth and development.



Umuziwabantu Mayor, Cllr Zungu, officially opening the Business Fair held at the Harding Corner Mall.



Informal and small businesses, and hawkers displaying their products during the Business Fair.



Local exhibitor, Mr Thabiso Mthembu (right), promoting his products to members of the community who visited the Business Fair.



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PRIORITY I : ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Farmers' Open Day promotes agriculture as a business

By Yanga Ngcukana: GCIS, Free State

On 13 October 2023, a number of farmers attended the Farmers' Open Day organised by the Free State Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) at Middelbult Farm in Petrusburg, Free State.

The owner of the farm, Ms Mirriam Daka (39), who has been passionate about farming since a young age, acquired the farm through funding from the DARD in May 2018.

The purpose of the Farmers' Open Day was to encourage young subsistence and emerging farmers to take agriculture as a business to improve their lives. Local commercial farmers who also attended the event shared their expertise on crop and livestock farming.

The Small Enterprise Development Agency outlined their non-financial assistance to businesses, including the farming sector. Farm employees were encouraged to dream big and learn as much as possible from their current employers so that they can gain the necessary leadership and management skills.

Farmers exhibited their produce and handmade items at the stalls while various government departments and entities promoted their institutions and provided some services to the farmers.



Mr Tsakatsi Mosikili outlining the products and services provided by the Free State DARD.



Some of the agricultural products on display at the exhibition stalls.

PRIORITY 4: SPATIAL INTEGRATION, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Water conservation awareness campaign targets kids

By Zukiswa Mqumbisa: GCIS, Eastern Cape

Preaching the gospel of saving water to young people could help the drought-stricken Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM) save water. The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), in collaboration with the NMBM, recently conducted a water-awareness campaign at the Kids Castle Pre-School.

The GCIS conducts the ongoing water-awareness campaign to ensure that people in the Metro conserve water to mitigate potential drought.

Before the recent rains, the Nelson Mandela Bay was heading for Day Zero, as local dams were starting to run out of water. Although dam levels are currently over 70% full, people have been urged to continue conserving water.

The NMBM's Public Relations and Events Coordinator, Ms Mercy Thinyane, told the Kids Castle Pre-School learners about the importance of conserving water.

"Water is important, we cannot do anything without water, and we need water to wash, for cooking and for watering our plants. We cannot survive without water, animals cannot survive without water and plants cannot survive without water," she said.

Ms Thinyane also taught them a water-wise song: "If it's yellow let it mellow, if it's brown flush it down." The kids also took part in a quiz with questions on how to save water.



Kids Castle Pre-School children with Ms Thinyane and the water-wise mascot, Thontsi, during the water-awareness campaign.

PRIORITY 6: CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

Presidential Imbizo attracts multitudes of people

By Bakang Ditibane: GCIS, North West

On 20 October 2023, more than 10 000 people gathered at the Ikageng Sports Complex, in the JB Marks Local Municipality within the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality in North West, where President Cyril Ramaphosa undertook the second leg of the District Development Model (DDM) Presidential Imbizo in the province.

The President was accompanied, among others, by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Ms Thembu Nkandimeng, North West Acting Premier, Mr Nono Maloyi, Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Mayor Nikiwe Num, the North West House of Traditional Leaders led by Chairperson Kgosi Seatlholo, various Cabinet Ministers, and North West members of the executive councils, mayors and councillors.

The North West DDM Presidential Imbizo aimed to bring government services closer to the people of Ikageng township and surrounding areas, to assess the availability of enabling infrastructure, evaluate levels of coordination across all spheres of government and interacting with the community on the challenges they face. Furthermore, government provided feedback from issues raised during the previous Presidential Imbizo held in Mahikeng, through various programmes and plans implemented. The theme of the Presidential Imbizo was “Leave No-One Behind”, in line with government’s collaboration with all sectors of society to transform the country through a sustainable, equitable and inclusive economy.

In his February 2022 State of the Nation Address, President Ramaphosa undertook to interact with communities in all provinces. A significant number of people from different parts of the province came to raise issues related to service delivery to President Ramaphosa and his delegation. The responses to the questions reaffirmed government’s commitment to expedite

the process of resolving service-delivery issues, working together with business and community members in the province. Some of the issues raised included the high rate of crime, poor maintenance of roads, electricity, illegal mining (zama zama) operations, water and sanitation, illegal foreigners, unemployment, corruption and general poor performance of municipalities in the province

President Ramaphosa visited the Ikageng Water Reservoir Works Project funded through the Department of Water and Sanitation’s Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant. The reservoir, with a capacity of about 25 megalitres, will supply water to various communities of Ikageng.

Over 22 000 households are expected benefit from the successful completion of the reservoir. Kgosi Seatlholo said: “We look forward to the youth and graduates in our communities to make a more valuable contribution to the growth of our economy. We envision the DDM as a peoples’ programme and not as a government programme.”

Acting North West Premier Maloyi said: “We have commenced with programmes of Operation Bulela Metsi through the intervention of Water and Sanitation Minister Senzo Mchunu.” The Office of the Premier has, through the Thuntsha Lerole Programme, visited several municipalities in North West to ensure access to service delivery across the province.



Exhibitions of various government services and products at the Ikageng Sports Complex during the Presidential Imbizo.



President Ramaphosa addressing the Presidential Imbizo.



Tumelo Ntsetse said:

“As Ward 4 residents in Jobetina, we are happy to be visited by President Ramaphosa to see the problems and challenges we encounter in the province. However, one thing for sure that I want the President to address and assist us with is youth empowerment. As youth, we are struggling and most of us end up abusing drugs. We have unemployed graduates who cannot use their qualifications. Furthermore, this leads to high crime rates in communities. We plead with the President to put more focus on youth empowerment to alleviate unemployment and high statistics of crime by providing support and recreational sports fields.”



Thabang Nkgweri said:

“As a resident of Jobetina in Klerksdorp, we came here to escalate our challenges to Mr President. I believe this day came with changes as we have been longing to address our struggles directly to the President. We are happy for the on-site services we received, and for the President for coming here to hear our cries as communities.”



Mongale Balete said:

“We came here from Jobetina in Klerksdorp, and happy to see the President coming to hear about the frustrations and challenges we face as unemployed youth of South Africa.”