



MYDISTRICTTODAY



STAY SAFE

VACCINATE TO SAVE SOUTH AFRICA

TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT CORONAVIRUS

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PRIORITY 3: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HEALTH.

World AIDS Day commemoration

By Lerato Setilo: GCIS, Free State

On 1 December 2022, the South African National AIDS Council in partnership with the National and Free State Department of Health, the Free State Office of the Premier, civil society, government and business sectors commemorated World AIDS Day at the Dr. Petrus Molemela Stadium in Bloemfontein.

World AIDS Day is an annual event that is commemorated around the world, and this year's was observed under the theme: "Equalise and Integrate to End AIDS."

Health Minister Joe Phaahla indicated that the purpose of the commemoration was to support people living with HIV and AIDS, and to remember those who succumbed to related illnesses.

The Minister also reflected on how this year's theme resonates with the inequalities that people living with HIV and AIDS are still facing, which include poverty, exclusion and inadequate access to services.

The Minister further indicated that the main goal of government is to ensure that people have a long and healthy life.

Free State Premier Sefora Ntombela said that living with HIV and AIDS is not a death threat, as government has made it possible for people to easily access antiretroviral treatment.

The Premier went on to encourage community members to take responsibility for their health and motivated them to get tested for HIV and AIDS.

In closing, two candles were lit in remembrance of those who lost their lives due to HIV and AIDS-related illnesses.



Minister Joe Phaahla and Premier Sefora Ntombela lighting the candles.



Community members who attended the event in Bloemfontein.



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**COVID-19 vaccine registration details
for 12-year-olds and above:**

Online at:
<https://vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za/#/>
Send the word **REGISTER** to 0600 123 456
on WhatsApp.
Via SMS by dialling *134*832#.
Call the COVID-19 hotline 0800 029 999.



Bridgette Motlohi said:

“The celebrations were very successful as we celebrated with different organisations. We were all considered. The words of encouragement were well received.”



Moliehi Rasui-Bokamoso said:

“The event was very successful as issues of Gender-Based Violence were also addressed.”

PRIORITY 2: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Government supports small businesses

By Thenjiwe Konono: GCIS, Northern Cape

Emthanjeni Local Municipality, through Mayor Lulamaile Nkumbi, hosted Small Business Development Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, during the municipality's Local Economic Development (LED) Summit, in De Aar on 17 and 18 November 2022.

Held under the theme: "A centre for development and service excellence focused on economic development in pursuit of a better life for all," the event attracted over 200 delegates, comprising various stakeholders. The summit was aimed at encouraging the promotion and marketing of the products and services of Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs).

It also sought to foster new and improved relationships with key stakeholders that can facilitate change and future economic investment in the municipality, increasing dialogue among emerging and big businesses and creating of a platform that will stimulate the municipal economy and lobby resources for job creation and SMME development.

Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams requested that all the beneficiaries who were previously funded by government should be traced and participate in the development of a comprehensive plan by the municipality, which is vital to ensure private-sector investment.

Dr Phila Nzo, from Wits University, facilitated the panel discussions, where SMMEs were allowed to pose their questions and provide inputs.

Some of the issues raised included the need for the municipality to revise its by-laws, which can prevent illegal foreigners from accessing land, and training SMMEs to afford them equal opportunities to apply for tenders.



Dumisani Fihla said:

"The programme was good, however, such an event should be rolled out across the district, and not in De Aar only. People from Hanover and Bristown need this information. Those two towns are slowly dying but are situated on the N1 and N12. We need an implementation."



Ruegaiche de Vos said:

"As SMMEs, we need training for us to be able to upgrade our businesses. It is no use if investors invest in the municipality of Emthanjeni, if SMMEs will not be part of the development."



Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams addressing the audience during the Emthanjeni LED Summit.



SMMEs members who attended the summit.

PRIORITY 6: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

Empowering people with disabilities

By Keoagile Rakgang: GCIS, Gauteng

The International Day for Persons Living with Disability was observed on 3 December while November was Disability Rights Awareness Month.

The 2022 Disability Rights Awareness Month was commemorated under the theme: “Empowering Persons with Disabilities through Resourceful, Sustainable and Safe Environments”.

In an effort to commemorate the campaign, Tshepang Centre for persons living with disabilities in partnership with community development workers of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and various organisations hosted the Disability Awareness Programme in Rietvallei 2 and 3, on 24 November 2022.

The programme aimed to raise awareness on the rights, well-being of persons living with disabilities, and to empower them with available opportunities they can access to improve their lives.

Selinah Nxumalo, Ward Councillor of Rietvallei said they are working hard with Tshepang Centre to create a friendly environment with more opportunities for persons living with disabilities in their area.

“As Mogale City Municipality, we have a specialised unit whose objective is to educate and ensure that relevant information is shared with the centre so that it can cascaded to relevant individuals,” she said.

Tseko Manzini, co-founder of Hope for People living with Disabilities expressed how he wants persons living with disabilities to be seen, included and celebrated.

His organizations focuses on sports and encourages them to participate in any kind of sport they might be interested in.

“We are working very hard to train our sports people because we want to go as far as the Paralympics. We want to show the world that even if we are from disadvantaged backgrounds, we are capable because we do not let our disabilities define us,” said Manzini.

He also advised parents to refrain from keeping their children indoors and that they should allow them to interact with others and be involved in activities that will uplift them because that is how they find their purpose and passion.

A representative from Teddy Bear Clinic, Zodwa Nkosi, explained the cases they have to deal with on a daily basis that involves children living with disabilities. She said a child living with a disability is usually introverted and not very expressive.

“Parents should allow their children to be comfortable and free around them, so that talking to them can be easier, and parents should not take lightly any kind of complaint their child brings forth to them. It is important to educate not only children, but elders living with disabilities about sexual harassment because elders to get sexually abused. We need to teach them about the different kinds of sexual harassment and to immediately talk to a person they can trust should they go through any of it,” said Nkosi.

She further advised parents that they should always be aware of children’s surroundings and whereabouts and not be negligent with their children because that is how most of them end up being abused and that if they are not able to take care of the child, they should take him/her to a home or a family member they trust.

The Department of Employment and Labour, Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the National Youth Development Agency were also present at the event, and they spoke on all the opportunities available for persons living with disabilities. They were encouraged to apply for jobs, skills development projects or funding for their businesses.



Eusaviour Ngolola engaging with the participants on disability rights.



Community members accessing government material at the event.



Emmanuel Shezi said:

“We need to teach people in the area how to treat persons with disabilities with love and care. They need to be aware that they belong to the community like everyone else and to stop treating them like outsiders.”



Aphiwe Goba said:

“Persons living with disabilities are also human and deserve to be treated with respect like any other person. We need to accept them for who they are and not judge them because living with a disability does not mean you are not able to do other things.”



Sphe Ndlovu said:

“Prison is not a nice place to live in. You are not allowed to visit home and go out with your friends. You get different attitudes from inmates and even prison staff. My advice to young people is that they must focus on doing good and avoid things that could land them in jail.”



Cyril Ngubane said:

“I was arrested for pulling a woman’s hair because I failed to contain myself when that woman provoked me because of my skin colour. My advice to other men is that they should try and verbalise their issues.”

PRIORITY 6: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

Former offenders tackle violence and femicide

By Mlungisi Dlamini: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

History was made when former inmates from various jails in uMgungundlovu District made their voices heard on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide issues during a community dialogue that was held at Incema Non-Profit Organisation Offices in Edendale, Pietermaritzburg, on 29 November 2022.

The majority of those former inmates, including one young woman, come from greater Edendale.

They took to the stage and made it clear to everyone that jail was not a good place for a human being because once convicted, that stays with you for the rest of your life.

They warned the community not to physically and emotionally abuse one another, instead, they should seek professional help if there is a problem in their families.

One of them, Cyril Ngubane, who had been placed under house arrest for physically assaulting a woman, advised men to learn to verbalise issues and not physically abuse women.

“Even house arrest is like living your life in hell because you have to report your movements, even when you go job hunting in a different area you need to inform the authorities,” he said.

According to Thenjiwe Ngcobo, who is the Director of INCEMA Non-Governmental Organisation, majority of young people who attended the event are recovering from drug addiction.

She said the organisation is working with the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence to rehabilitate them.

“Our focus is on youth because we want to correct their behaviour at a young age and groom them to be good men and women who do not abuse one another.

Our programme also seeks to reduce the influx to the juvenile prison hence we have called people who have prison experience to come and talk to the children.



Different stakeholders participating on the discussion during a community dialogue in Edendale.