




MY DISTRICT TODAY



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OUTCOME 3: ALL PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE AND FEEL SAFE.

A social dialogue to address drug abuse and disability stereotypes

By Masego Motshidisi, GCIS Northern Cape



Neliswa Louw of the Department of Education talking about the available special schools in the province.



Sergeant Kok presenting the SAPS role in addressing the effects of drugs.



Members of LoveLife the event.



Residents receiving information products.

Residents of Kimberley participated in a dialogue intended to clarify the impacts of drug abuse and dependence on 18 November 2016. Held at the Manne Dipico Thusong Service Centre, the dialogue promoted open discussion for addiction awareness and prevention.

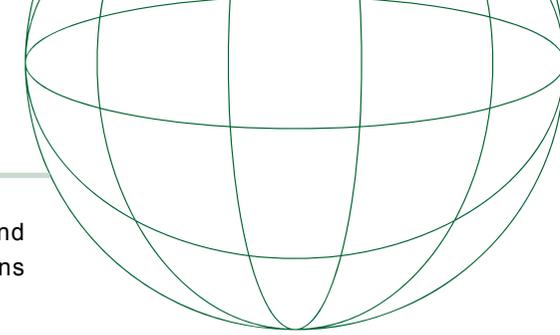
The community event opened with brief presentations from a wide variety of recovery institutions including the Department of Social Development, South African Police Service (SAPS), the National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders, Northern Cape Drug Rehab Centre and many others.



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Specialists spoke about the abuse of prescription drugs, signs of addiction, treatment and counselling. They discussed possible ways that the community can engage to find solutions that will help to end the abuse of women and children.

As part of the ongoing commemoration of Disability Rights Awareness Month, different stakeholders shared information on their available services.

Ursula Hendricks, founder of the Thuso Thusong Service Centre for children with disabilities motivated parents with special-needs children not to let their situations discourage them.

The non-governmental organisation consisting of a group of mothers envisions a full-time physiotherapist at the centre, which can only be made possible through financial support from government or the private sector.

Information leaflets, news publications and *Vuk'uzenzele* newspapers were disseminated at the event.



Julianne Shudder said:
“Now I understand that living with a child with a disability is expensive, it is not easy for many parents. Grants are not enough, too many resources are needed. I am happy to know that there is help for everyone out there.”



Christobelle Jullies said:
“I am also living with a disability. I was shot in the head. The presentations on the disability topic inspired me.”



Esmarelda Olyyn said:
“I was touched by the speeches around disability. There are special schools for children, schools that will help them and polish their talents. Parents should not hide their children in their houses because of their disability as there are good institutions for these children.”



Pholo Rameno said:

“We urge government to have more of these events that seek to highlight the challenge of “blessers” as they are the ones spreading the virus.”



Fankie Tladi said:

“I am happy that I tested for HIV.”



Lehlohonolo Nonyane said:

“My job now is to ensure that my HIV status does not change.”

OUTCOME 2: A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE FOR ALL SOUTH AFRICANS.

MEC commemorates World AIDS Day with community members

By Ntombi Mhlambi: GCIS, Free State



Different stakeholders rendering their services at the event.

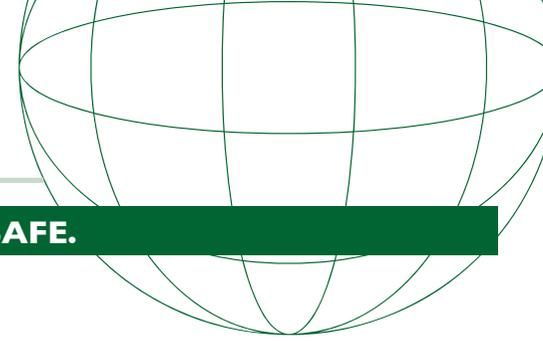


MEC Butana Komphela engaging with different stakeholders.

World AIDS Day is observed on 1 December every year since 1988. It is dedicated to raising awareness of the disease caused by the spread of HIV. Since its launch, great progress has been made in reducing the stigma still faced by many, and the number of people dying from AIDS-related illnesses since the first cases were reported.

This year’s event was commemorated under the theme: “Hands up for HIV Prevention”. The campaign looks at ways to improve prevention strategies, identifying key areas among specific groups of people who are vulnerable to transmission – adolescent girls and young women in particular. The Free State Provincial Government held its provincial event in Thabong, Welkom on 1 December 2016. The event took place at Zuka Baloyi Stadium.

The MEC for Health, Butana Komphela, said government is committed to fighting the virus. “We provide ARV medication to anyone who is HIV-positive for free without even checking the viral load, which is a huge improvement,” he said. He also urged older men to stop using money to lure young poor girls into getting sexually involved with them.



Marietjie Bothma said:

“I believe I am a survivor because after such things many do not survive – we have to go and bury them. Once you go to the courts and face your perpetrators and justice gets served, that makes you the overcomer. The justice system is there to help us.”



Merriam said:

“I was a victim of rape three times. In 2014, I was going to Johannesburg for chemotherapy. When I came back home, a perpetrator came to my house and raped me. I am a mother and a grandmother. It was not easy to deal with this, but I persevered and today I believe I am a conqueror and not a victim.”



Cultural entertainment group performing at the event.

OUTCOME 3: ALL PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE AND FEEL SAFE.

Fight against crime during the festive season intensified

By Thenjiwe Konono: GCIS, Northern Cape



Mayor of Molemole Councillor Edward Paya with Justice Minister Michael Masutha at the launch of the Sexual Offences Court event and the unveiling the symbolic plaque at Morebeng village.



Some of the victims of sexual offences and abuse who are now volunteers at an organisation called Move for Transformation also told their stories through drama.

Justice and Correctional Services Minister Michael Masutha said government has a determined goal of promoting a justice system that is victim-friendly, efficient and sensitive to the needs of victims of sexual offences. He was speaking at the launch of Sekgosese Sexual Offences Court on 25 November 2016 in Morebeng village.

The launch also marked the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign. This year’s campaign is observed under the theme: “Count me in: together moving a non-violent South Africa forward”.

Minister Masutha said government was encouraged by the conviction rate of sexual offences, which now stands at 73% but also called on the youth to play a role in protecting the rights of women and children.

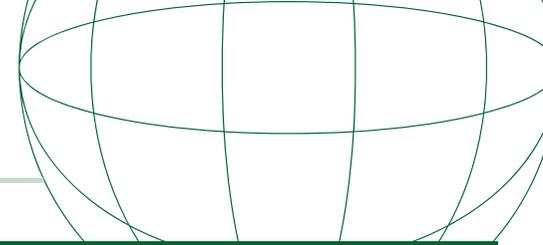
“The highest prevalence of violent crimes occurs among the youth. Incidents of abuse of substances are prevalent among young people. Young people, ultimately it is in your hands – do you want to be a beacon hope or a symbol of terror in your community? Fight for your family, fight for your community, fight for your country,” said the Minister.

It was the story of Marietjie Bothma and the other victims of sexual offences that brought many in the tents to tears, including Mayor Edward Paya who had to fight back tears when he stood up to introduce the Minister.

Marietjie told the crowd that she had a difficult childhood including being raped at the age of two. “I was raped at two years by my adoptive father who was a minister and for sixteen years every day.

“At the age of 16, I ended up in the streets of Hillbrow. One 13 August 2002, I was raped by eight men, and the lady I was staying with in the street was stabbed 37 times. I went through 18 operations, and was told that I will never ever have children,” she said.

The Sekgosese Sexual Offences Court is the 50th to be launched in South Africa. The sexual offences courts were reintroduced by government in August 2013 to provide specialised support services to victims of sexual offences, decrease turnaround times for finalisation of sexual offences cases and improve conviction rates in these cases.



Nellie Mahlangu

“I agree that it is important to save water. What will we do if our taps run dry? But our water bills remain high even if we try and use water sparingly.”



Molebogeng Tjiane said:

“I understand that we must save water. We urge the City of Tshwane to provide us with quality water.”

OUTCOME 10: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS AND NATURAL RESOURCES THAT ARE WELL PROTECTED AND CONTINUALLY ENHANCED.

Deputy President urges young people to make good career choices

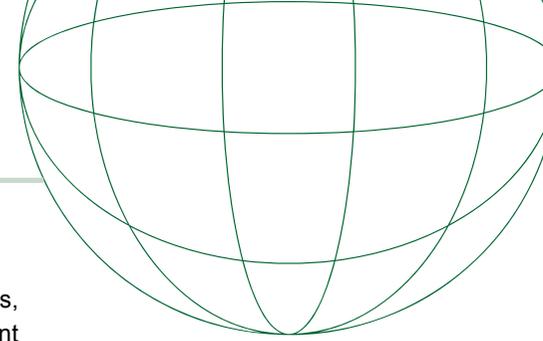
By Odas Ngobeni: GCIS, Limpopo



Some of the community volunteers who participated in the door-to-door campaign.

The country is currently experiencing drought and heat waves that lead to severe water shortages. Municipalities have been urging residents to use water sparingly but these calls have been neglected. As part of educating the community about the importance of saving water, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in conjunction with Tshwane Water, Water Research Commission and local stakeholders embarked on a two-day education and awareness campaign aimed at educating and encouraging members of the community to use water sparingly.

The campaign took place on 16 November in a three-pronged approach that included a full briefing session for community volunteers where they were educated about the importance of that campaign and water and environmental issues that affect most of the communities followed by a door-to-door activation where the “trained” volunteers educated members of the community about how to save water, other water-saving tips, rain-water harvesting and how to read water meters. It ended with a radio programme on Kangala Community Radio Services where the campaign’s key messages were amplified to a wider audience.



Asia Masuku said:

“I am glad that I was shown how to read the water meter because I will now monitor how much water we consume. I have also learned a lot about how scarce water in our country is. I will try and save as much water as possible.”



Phumzile Masemula said:

“I am glad that I am one of the water ambassadors. I have learned a lot about how to save water and I will continue to educate and encourage my neighbours to use water sparingly and get used to harvesting rain water.”

During the briefing session, community volunteers were educated about the 10 water-saving tips, namely to install a low-flow shower head and tap aerators, use a dual-flush toilet cistern, plant indigenous or drought-resistant shrubs, water gardens before 10:00 or after 16:00 and only when necessary, collect rain water for reuse in the garden or washing vehicles, use a broom instead of a hosepipe when cleaning driveways or patios, cover swimming pools to reduce evaporation, shower rather than bath, close a running tap while brushing teeth or shaving and regularly checking toilets and taps for leaks.

The radio messages were centred around the “Six Rs” in relation to water usage, namely; respect water and use it sparingly, reduce water usage, reuse water for gardening and other purposes, repair leaking pipes, pumps or taps, record water meter reading to monitor consumption and report burst pipes, water abuse, broken water equipment to the relevant authorities.

Maria Mogale from the City of Tshwane’s Department of Water and Sanitation encouraged everyone to become a responsible citizen by saving water. “People should realise that water is a very precious commodity, it must be used sparingly as it has no substitute,” said Mogale.

The GCIS engaged relevant stakeholders to be part of the activation, sourced information products for distribution, took photographs, distributed of information products and secured a free radio slot for the interview. Through this intervention, knowledge generated will contribute towards saving water for the benefit of the communities and decision-making authorities.



Gugu Ngwenya and Martha Msiza educating senior citizen Nellie Mahlangu about the importance of using water sparingly.