



MY DISTRICT TODAY

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OUTCOME 12(b): AN EMPOWERED, FAIR AND INCLUSIVE CITIZENSHIP

Working together to make a difference for Mandela

Nelson Mandela International Day, also known as Mandela Day, is held on 18 July each year. The day commemorates former President Mandela's achievements in working towards peaceful conflict resolution, democracy, human, rights, peace and reconciliation.

People and organisations around the world take part in many activities to promote Mandela Day. The message is simple: Nelson Mandela gave 67 years of his life fighting for the rights of humanity. Following in his footsteps, everyone is asked to give 67 minutes of their time and do something good for humanity, whether it's supporting your chosen charity or serving your local community.

In honour of Madiba's legacy, the Government Communication and Information System's Gauteng office, Ekurhuleni Social Development, the Duduza Customer Care Centre and community development workers spent their 67 minutes in the Duduza township in Ekurhuleni, donating clothes, shoes and kitchen appliances to 20 needy children from five child-headed households,

in line with the Nelson Mandela Children Fund's theme for 2012: *Celebrating our children.*

One of the recipients was 24-year-old Phindile Majola. She and her three siblings, aged between 15 and 19, are orphans. In 2011, a tornado struck Duduza and they lost most of their valuables; and the family has been struggling to rebuild their lives ever since. Phindile

was grateful for the microwave and kettle they received to them on Mandela Day.

She expressed her appreciation at the handover of the donations. "Thank you for the donation! Since our parents passed away, life has been tough for us; and when our house was struck by a tornado, things just got worse. But we hope to get through this and rebuild our lives."

All the other households that were visited were grateful and thanked donors for their generosity.

"We hope that this positive energy will swell across our communities, and see the spirit of Ubuntu growing in community members who have the potential to provide a helping hand."



Phindile Majola (second from left) receives a new microwave, kettle, clothes and shoes from members of the Government Communication and Information System, Ekurhuleni Social Development officials and community development workers.



OUTCOME 5: A SKILLED AND CAPABLE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT AN INCLUSIVE GROWTH PATH

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Cooperatives to better lives of poor communities

Cooperative promotion and development is a key socio-economic development agenda item for government, which recognises the potential of cooperatives to improve the economic and social circumstances of citizens.

Globally, cooperatives are key players in the economies of many countries. In South Africa, government is ensuring that a supportive environment is created in which cooperatives are not only promoted but also developed as autonomous and sustainable business forms.

The cooperative movement itself has a meaningful role to play to support the promotion and growth of viable business entities that can contribute meaningfully to the social and economic development of its members.

The Government Communication and Information System collaborated with key stakeholders to promote cooperatives as part of government's mechanism to foster social and economic development.

In late 2005, Gauteng community development workers identified unemployed women in Senaoane, Phiri, Mapetla and Protea Glen who were skilled in sewing, beadwork, baking, catering and the design of traditional wear.

They were given a working area at the Senaoane Swimming Pool and sewing machines were provided, pending their move to a larger premise.

A mass economic opportunities workshop was organised where the representatives from the Gauteng Enterprise Propeller (GEP) explained the various ways of starting a business to them. At a subsequent workshop by the Department of Trade and Industry, they gained a better understanding of the registration processes and the overall management of a cooperative.

Today, members of the Senaoane Women's Cooperative, Itshe le Mzansi, look forward to training in business management and marketing through the GEP.

Statistics South Africa's *General Household Survey (2010)* indicated that 52% of the South African population was female, and just more than one fifth (21%) resides in rural areas.

It is therefore critical for women to access information on these developmental programmes of government to improve the socio-economic statuses of their families. The Ipelegeng Thusong Service Centre did just that, and the members of Itshe le Mzansi now face a brighter future.



Taking the plunge.

Growing up in an abusive family, William Mdopo was exposed to a lot of negative people in his formative years. While this might sound like a recipe for failure, it inspired 47-year-old Mdopo to make a success of his life despite the odds against him.

Besides the violence, he says he had to watch helplessly as people close to him died of HIV/AIDS-related diseases. His mother's death made things even worse. That was when he realised that he would need a positive mindset to survive.

Through all the hardships, he has always wanted to work in a catering environment. "Even in high school, I was doing Home Economics with the girls. I knew I wanted to be in the food business one day." To make ends meet, he worked as truck assistant and a petrol attendant to support his family. Realising that his dream was disappearing in front of his eyes, he decided to take the plunge and pursue his lifelong dream.

"I joined the Yabonga Initiative in 2010, working at their bakery, which was funded by the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Since I began working there, the skills I've learnt and the environment have made my life easier.

"I'm a supervisor – I have four people working under me and I'm living my dream. Through this project, I've realised my potential."

Mdopo has been saving most the of the stipend he is getting from the project. "My dream is to have my own bakery, so I'm saving money towards making that a reality. If all goes well, I will realise

that dream and employ a lot of people from the community."

The EPWP is one of government's programmes aimed at providing poverty relief and income relief through temporary work for the unemployed to carry out socially useful activities.



Outcome 10: Environmental assets and natural resources that are well protected and continually enhanced

Youth urged to follow water careers

The annual Youth Summit on Water and Climate Change is hosted by the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs. The summit creates a platform for young people participating in projects of 2020 Vision, a school-based water and environment education programme.

The 2012 summit was held under the theme *Meaningful participation of Africa's youth in water-resource management can contribute to sustainable development*, and afforded young people an opportunity to share ideas and cooperate in fostering common solutions to continental water and climate change issues, get a better understanding of water-resource management and participate in different competitions.

The summit ended with an awards ceremony, where innovative water initiatives were awarded in different categories. About 20 learners from across the country received bursaries, certificates and

trophies during the event. Presenting the awards, the Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi, said that all participants of the summit were winners. She congratulated them for spreading the message on the importance of water-resource conservation and awareness in their communities.

According to Deputy Minister Mabudafhasi, all national winning schools will be put into three-year Eco-Schools programmes, which will include impact assessments and a focus on career promotion.

The Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms Edna Molewa, has urged the South African youth to choose careers in the water sector, and so close the gap in the sector's critical skills.

The event was also attended by two South African musical legends, Mam Abigail Kubheka and Mam Dorothy Masuka, who urged everyone to look after

the country's water. In their message of support and encouragement to the young people, the two challenged them to make use of opportunities available today and to consider education as the only solution to overcome the shortage of skills in the water sector.

In her address, Minister Molewa expressed her gratitude to all learners who participated in this year's summit and congratulated the 2012 award winners. "We are all proud. The creativity and commitment displayed in the competition should be taken further as (the learners) proceed in (their) careers and lives." She also hailed the youth representatives from the African Ministers' Council on Water, who attended the summit to share ideas on water-related matters. She urged them to participate in their countries to reshape the future of Africa's water sector.

