



MY DISTRICT TODAY

Issue no. 30 August 2012

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Outcome 1: Improved quality of basic education

Early childhood development centres get a boost By Kgalelelo Motsage, Northern Cape

Education is one of the five key priorities of government, and one of the outputs under Outcome 1 focuses on improving the quality of early childhood development (ECD).

Evidence points towards the benefits of pre-Grade 1 schooling in improving learning outcomes throughout primary and secondary schooling. Essentially, if all children are given a good educational foundation early in life they find it easier to learn beyond Grade 1. It is envisaged that Grade R will be universal by 2014. However, improving the quality of Grade R and ECD is a task that will need to extend beyond 2014.

ECD refers to a comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children, from birth to nine years of age, with the active participation of parents and caregivers. Its purpose is to protect children's rights to develop their full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential.

The John Taolo Gaetsewe Developmental Trust came to the aid of communities by embarking on a revitalisation project for ECD centres, which resulted in the construction of totally new state-of-the-art buildings in five communities.

All the buildings, built at an amount of R10 million, were handed over to the communities of Churchill, Segwaneng, Maphinick, Ncweng and Kagung in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality, Northern Cape.

When handing over the Ikeletso Centre to the community, the Executive Mayor of John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality, Councillor S Mosikatsi said, "The centres will prepare the children for formal schooling and ease challenges teachers struggle with during the first year of education."

The ECD centres came fully equipped with kitchens furnished with stoves, fridges, microwave ovens and other kitchen utensils. The classrooms are furnished with tables, chairs, carpets, mattresses, toys and books. For the purposes of management

and administration, centres have offices equipped with computers, stands, printers, scanners, fax machines and filing cabinets.

An excited ECD teacher, Ms Galehole, reiterated that the new centre is a great gift for the children of Kagung, who were attending school in a church building before. "We have enough space for the kids to move around, there are toys and transport to bring children from neighbouring communities. This is a blessing."



The Executive Mayor of John Taolo Gaetsewe, Councillor S Mosikatsi, officially opens the Ikeletso Early Childhood Development Centre.

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Early education key in combating TB

By Ntombi Mhlambi

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused by germs that are spread from person to person through the air. TB usually affects the lungs, but can also affect other parts of the body, such as the brain, kidneys or spine.

Combating HIV and AIDS and decreasing the occurrence of TB are some of the key interventions committed to by government under the priority of healthcare.

Kick TB is an interactive, fun and educational campaign aimed at teaching young children to properly identify the signs and symptoms of TB. It also seeks to educate the young ones in how to prevent contracting the disease, as well as the correct steps to follow in curing it.

The aim of the campaign is to let children know and understand all the facts relating to TB from an early age, which they can in turn share with others – especially parents and elders at their homes.

The Free State Department of Health's TB Management Directorate, in partnership with National TB Control and Management and the Desmond Tutu Foundation, took the Kick TB activation campaign to schools in various towns around the Thabo Mofutsanyana district.

Matwabeng Primary School and Rorisang Primary School in Senekal, Matswathaka Primary School and Nthute Primary School in Bethlehem, Tswelang Pele School and Lihobong Primary School in Makwane, and Tharollo Primary School and

Akofang Primary School in Phuthaditjhaba were the eight schools identified for the campaign.

Mrs Thwala, the principal of Nthute Primary School in Bethlehem, appreciates the efforts government is making to ensure that learners live a healthy lifestyle. This was the first time government institutions visited their school.

Mosoahle Mapelele, Free State Provincial Coordinator of TB Advocacy Communication, said in an interview with the Eastern Free State Express that Phuthaditjhaba, Makwane and Bluegumbosch have the biggest number of patients with multi-drug-resistant TB in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, and it was therefore necessary to bring the initiative to the area.



"Turbo Boots" having a good time with learners.



It was a fun-filled day for Nthute learners.

Outcome 1: Improved quality of basic education

Navigating young minds towards better informed choices

By Andile Duka, GCIS Tombo Thusong Centre, Eastern Cape



Education remains one of the top priorities of government in all spheres. The intention of government is to provide quality education to all learners, irrespective of where in the country they live. During his State of the Nation Address, President Zuma made a promise to intervene in the Eastern Cape to assist the Department of Education in improving the level of education.

As part of the contribution towards Goal 7 of the Eastern Cape Provincial Skills Development Strategy and Goal 8 of the National Skills Development Strategy, Eastern Cape Premier, Noxolo Kiviet, officially opened the Provincial Rural Career Expo at Ndamase Senior Secondary School in Libode.

This initiative by the Eastern Cape Government seeks to ensure that there is access to information on post-school learning and skills development opportunities, which will also assist to improve the quality of education in the province, as well as matric results.

Speaking at the official opening of the expo, Premier Kiviet encouraged learners to do well in their studies so that they can qualify for bursaries and financial assistance for further education and training (FET).

She appealed to teachers and parents to do everything in their power to assist learners so that matric results can improve.

The expo provided comprehensive information and support to the youth of the Libode district to guide their career choices and learning paths. Various organisations, such as the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, South African Qualifications Authority, Sector Education Training Authorities, FET colleges, universities and government departments, graced this event and had a wide range of enrichment sessions with learners.

Students were counselled on career paths, options for further studies, funding options, skills development and employment opportunities for unemployed youths.

It is estimated that about 1 500 young people attended the career expo. The lessons learnt from this event will guide planning for the 2013 expanded programme to ensure that all districts have access to the necessary information.



Learners interacting with various exhibitors to find information on career choices and financial assistance on the right.



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

Bringing government services closer to the people

By Matshidiso Mokoka, GCIS Mohlakeng Thusong Service Centre

Government is always striving to make sure that its citizens are well-informed of its services and are able to access opportunities they can use to improve their lives.

In pursuit of this, the Gauteng Premier's Office, in partnership with GCIS and Merafong Local Municipality, hosted a Service Delivery Outreach in Wedela, Carletonville, west of Johannesburg. Wedela is a remote community, surrounded by mines and situated far from the services that can be found in Carletonville or at the Khutsong Service Centre.

The main purpose of the outreach was to bring services closer to the people and to show the communities that there are opportunities available for them to improve their lives.

Stakeholders that supported the campaign by providing services included the South African Social Services Agency, the departments of home affairs, social development, roads and transport, labour, and housing.

Services offered included applications for documentation such as identity documents and birth certificates. Mobile tents from a non-governmental organisation, called Right to Care, were made available to provide HIV testing and counselling to interested community members.

Mr TK Lesotho from Merafong Local Municipality was impressed with what government was doing for the community. "We do appreciate what government is doing for the community of Wedela. This is a community of people who live too far from

town and are unable to access most of the services of government," he said.

One of the key successes of the outreach was that some of the community members were given title deeds, enabling them to be owners of their RDP homes. One of the beneficiaries, Ms Nomfusi Mavis Tsobilaye, was very happy to receive the title deed from the municipality.

She expressed her happiness by saying, "I give thanks to what the government is doing for us. I am so happy today to have papers that make me the rightful owner of my house."



Tshwaraganang Barolong Women's Project's sewing machines.



Some of the cleaning material made by the Tshwaraganang Barolong Women's Project.

