



MY DISTRICT TODAY

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Outcome 12(b): An empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship

Celebrating heritage under one umbrella

Matshidiso Mokoka, GCIS Gauteng

Heritage Month 2012, was characterised by activities aimed at creating awareness of South Africa's liberation heritage through oral history narrations, exhibitions, poetry, dance, songs and site visits to preserve our collective memory and promote national identity.

One such activity took place at the West Rand District Municipality in Gauteng. The district hosted the GO WEST! festival, with the intention of promoting social cohesion and promoting the district as a tourist destination. This five-day event took place from 19 to 23 September, with different sessions held each day.

The festival kicked off with a charity golf day.

There was also a trip for school children to Maropeng Cradle of Humankind, a dinner for the aged of the West Rand, a comedy show and three great music festivals – the GO WEST! Youth Bash in Randfontein, the GO WEST! Gospel Concert in Merafong and the GO WEST! Concert in the Park in Krugersdorp. Traditional dance groups showcased their dance routines and emulated diverse cultures – from Batswana, Xhosa and Venda to Zulu.

The West Rand District Mayor, Cllr Mpho Nawa, encouraged the community to embrace each other and be tolerant of different cultures and traditions. "People should learn to live with each other in communities, irrespective of colour, race or creed.



School children gather for dance and song after their trip to Maropeng during the GO WEST! festival.

Government has declared that this month be celebrated under the theme: *Celebrating the heroes and heroines of the liberation struggle in South Africa*. In essence, this means that South Africa is a country with a rich and diverse liberation heritage." He added that education was key to fighting xenophobia and that people needed to learn more about each other's cultures and traditions.

Owing to the huge success of the festival, the mayor and all stakeholders involved decided to incorporate the festival into the annual Heritage Month events that will be celebrated throughout the district. The event was also attended by the Gauteng Premier; the MEC of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation, and mayors from all municipalities on the West Rand.

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Outcome 4: Decent employment through inclusive economic growth

Empowered by government opportunities

Matshidiso Mokoka, GCIS Gauteng

Economic development is one of government’s key priorities. To assist people in developing their businesses, government agencies such as the Gauteng Enterprise Propeller (GEP) have been established.

Local economic development (LED) structures have also been established in municipalities to assist people with economic development matters. On 29 September, the GCIS organised a radio interview with stakeholders from the GEP and Mogale City LED in an effort to cascade this message to a wider audience, to promote their services and also to bring one of their beneficiaries to give testimony of these services.

Mashudu Madzanga is a 39-year-old small entrepreneur from Venda who relocated to Johannesburg looking for work. He started working at a bank and boosted his income by selling linen to some of his colleagues. This led him to establish his own textile business, Madzanga Linen, in 1999.

He approached agencies such as the Industrial Development Cooperation (IDC) for funding with no luck. He was informed by industry experts from



Stakeholders during the interview with Rainbow FM.

the IDC that his idea of a textile business would not be successful as many such businesses were closing. “But I never gave up hope when I was



One of the printed linens that Madzanga produces.

rejected for funding. I started working hard and saved every cent that I had to buy machinery for the business,” he said. “I realised as time went by that I needed to build up clientele for my products and to come up with a better way to market the business.” He approached the GEP in Krugersdorp for assistance. “They helped me with the marketing aspect by setting up a website and printing business cards and flyers for the business.” Currently, Madzanga Linen employs 15 people – most of them previously disadvantaged.

It was emphasised during the interview by the stakeholders that people didn’t have to travel long distances to find information on how to register their businesses, since structures such as the GEP and LEDs were available close to them. “Mogale City has partnered with the Department of Trade and Industry and we will assist those people who are interested in opening up businesses to deliver their application to the department ourselves instead of them travelling to Pretoria to do so,” said Benjamin Selogile from the Mogale City LED.

For more information on Madzanga Linen, visit: www.madzanga.com.



Outcome 1: Improved quality of basic education

Apply now – avoid last-minute applications

Cholo Mothibi – GCIS Free State

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in partnership with different stakeholders held a youth services and career expo on 26 September at Phuthaditjhaba community hall in QwaQwa. It is one of the poorest areas in the Free State with very high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth. It is also a Presidential Nodal Point to enhance the implementation of development initiatives in the area.

The hall was filled with hundreds of youth who went from stall to stall to find out about different career opportunities available to them and services

that they could use. Some of the 13 institutions, which were exhibiting, were the Small Enterprise Development Agency, Services Sector Education and Training Authority, INSETA, the University of the Free State, Absa Bank, the South African Revenue Service, and the departments of water affairs, higher education and training, labour and health.

The expo which is part of the Apply Now Campaign and the South African Qualifications Authority from the Department of Higher Education and Training helped various learners by informing them

about the importance of applying early to tertiary institutions rather than wait until the last minute.

Many of the youth visiting the expo said they would surely share the information they received during the day with their friends as they felt this information was important for youth who wanted to better themselves.

Similar expos will be held by the GCIS in the different districts of the Free State during October to give youth in other districts the opportunity to access this information as well.



South African Qualifications Authority personnel interacting with learners at the expo.



Youth visiting the GCIS stall at the expo.

Outcome 1: Improved quality of basic education

Mud schools are a thing of the past

Yolisa Manxiwa – GCIS Eastern Cape

Government has prioritised the improvement of the quality of basic education as Outcome 1 of a total of 12 outcomes. This means that basic education is government's top priority. To confirm this, President Jacob Zuma officially handed over a brand new school to the community of Mqangqweni Village, in Libode in the Eastern Cape, on 2 October 2012.

Mphathiswa Senior Primary School in Libode is part of the first batch of 49 mud schools identified and earmarked for replacement in 2012 through a service delivery agreement with the Development Bank of Southern Africa, as part of the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative (ASIDI). ASIDI aims to replace all mud schools and inappropriate structures, as well as refurbish dilapidated and ill-equipped schools.

Of the 16 contractors appointed to construct the 49 schools, 69% are based in the Eastern Cape. The project has created 2 829 temporary employment opportunities with the use of 109 small, medium and micro enterprises subcontracted for the project.

The Minister of Education, Ms Angie Motshekga appreciated and thanked the School Governing Body for the support they gave to the project, which confirmed that education is a societal issue.

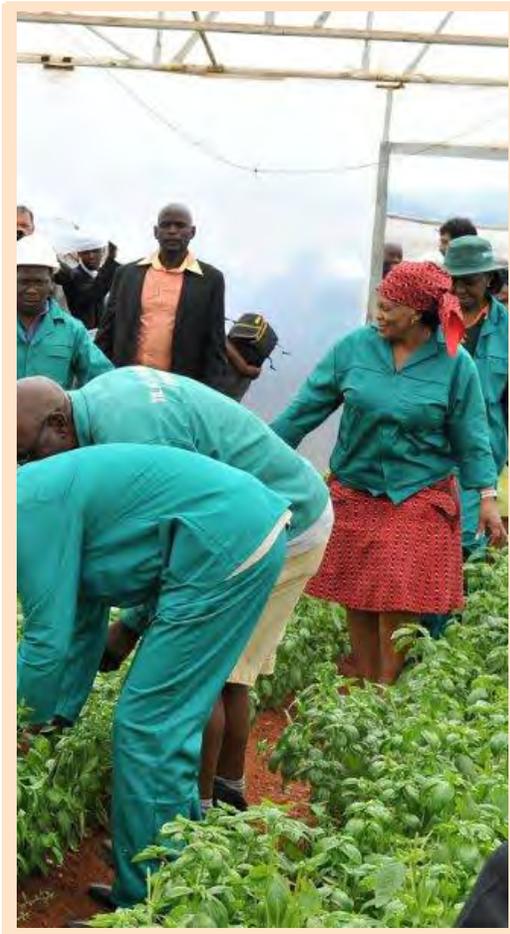
In his keynote address, the President said, "The challenge remaining on the part of this school and the other schools we are providing with new facilities, is to ensure that these facilities are maintained in good form and that every attempt should be made to preserve this investment for the benefit of future generations."

He said, "Education is absolutely important for the success of the nation. With proper infrastructure we must ensure that we produce quality results and we must work together to build the nation as a community, parents and learners." He added that it was government's responsibility to build proper schools for communities; a decision was taken to eradicate all mud schools to ensure that there was a radical shift from the apartheid system.

An ecstatic learner Asemahle Somgwagwa said, "I am very happy and promise that we will work harder. It was very difficult for us, our school was very old and our books would be wet when it rained as roofs were leaking. We are excited as learners about the library and the computer laboratory."

Mr Sabelo Dumani, the school Community Liaison Officer, shared the same sentiments saying, "It is a true blessing. The mud school was a community initiative built in 1988 and this progress is really appreciated. We thank the teachers who have been patient with the situation and have been working hard through all these years."

Over and above the progress made in the eradication of inappropriate structures, 155 schools have already been provided with sanitation facilities, 187 with water and 99 with electricity. These projects are located in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, the Free State, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the Western Cape.



The old Mphathiswa Senior Primary School in Libode in the Eastern Cape



The Premier of the Eastern Cape during the opening, with President Jacob Zuma and other leaders in government.



The new Mphathiswa Senior Primary School.