



MY DISTRICT TODAY



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OUTCOME I: IMPROVED QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION

Schools reopen in the Northern Cape

By: Tshiamo Maruping: DoC, Northern Cape



Hoërskool Groblershoop learners at their school.



Premier Sylvia Lucas at the school-reopening gathering of Hoërskool Groblershoop.



Orion High School learners' first day at school.

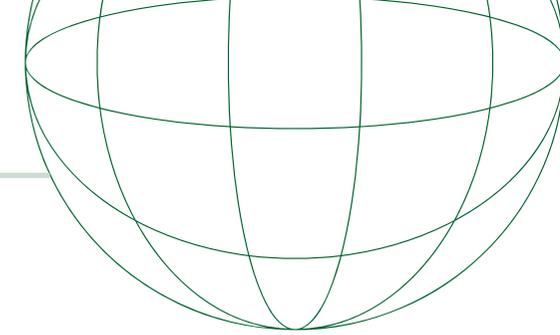
On 21 January 2015, all coastal learners returned to school. Members of the Northern Cape Executive Council headed to various schools around the province to monitor the reopening of schools in Kimberley. Learners, educators and members of the School Governing Body gathered in the Groblershoop School Hall to listen to Northern Cape Premier, Sylvia Lucas, addressing them on their first day at school this year.

Premier Lucas said that learners have the responsibility to be at school everyday, dressed in school uniform and 100% committed to their school work. The MEC for Transport, Safety and Liaison, Martha Bartlett, visited schools around De Aar and also addressed learners on issues of safety regarding transportation to schools.



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Lemuel Oseisodie said:

"I started at this school with doubts and had no motive for myself or my future. All I had in mind was to pass and make my parents happy. I later realised that it is very important for every learner to be self-motivated. Today I am the head boy of this great school. My committee and I have great plans for this year and we hope to implement all our plans as envisioned."



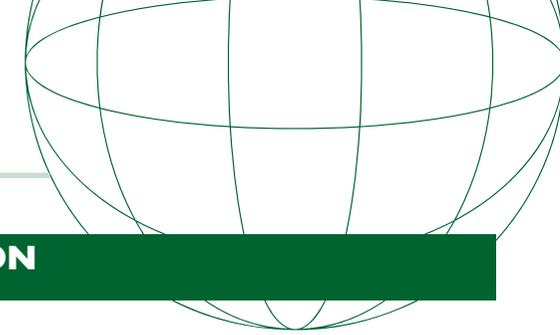
David Caster said:

"The reason I chose this school was that it is one of the great schools around Kimberley. My first day of high school was amazing; with the highlight of the warm welcome I received from educators and fellow learners. I auditioned for the school choir and hope to make it. I was very nervous during the audition. The school's headmaster urged us to work hard from the first day and not wait for the last quarter of the year."



Songiswa Malangeni said:

"I am 90% ready, the other 10% is just an uncertainty of not knowing what to expect from the new subjects that I will be teaching this year. The boys seem to be ready to tackle this year with the assistance of parents and educators. I will continue doing what I do best, providing moral support to the boys and assisting them in terms of their academics. I will also encourage them to participate in sports. I will also inspire them to follow their dreams."



OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION



Nonkululeko Ngcobo said:

“We are no longer struggling with food since receiving the vouchers. There has been a lot of positive change in my life, family and community since Minister Muthambi’s visit. If it was not for her involvement, I would not be back at school. I am grateful for everything that government has done for me and my family.”



Thandokazi Ntombela said:

“Minister Muthambi has delivered on most promises she made. Our living conditions would still be the same if it was not for her assistance and other government departments. They have done a lot for my family and community.”

Minister Muthambi brings positive change

By: Mlungisi Dlamini and Nompilo Mchunu: DoC, KwaZulu-Natal

Communications Minister Faith Muthambi’s adoption of Ward 14 in Willowfontain, Pietermaritzburg has yielded good results for two local young women. Thandokazi Ntombela and Nonkululeko Ngcobo could not attend school in 2014 due to several challenges faced by their families. These challenges ranged from physical abuse, illness and inadequate school necessities. Through interventions done by Minister Muthambi and the Department of Communications (DoC) KwaZulu-Natal Office, Ntombela and Ngcobo went back to school on 21 January when schools reopened for 2015. They are both doing Grade 11 at Ikusaselihe High School.

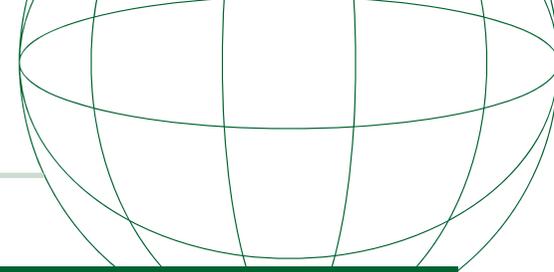
Minister Muthambi adopted the ward with a special devotion to five families during the Presidential Imbizo that was held in Pietermaritzburg on 30 September 2014. Ngcobo, an orphan, had been physically abused by her mentally disturbed brother who was on drugs. Since Minister Muthambi’s visit, various departments have assisted Ngcobo and her family. The brother has been admitted to Edendale Hospital following intervention by the Plessislear police. The family has also been receiving monthly food vouchers from the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) since Minister Muthambi’s first visit.

When the DoC visited them at school on 27 January, Ngcobo was singing songs of praise for Minister Muthambi. “Since the Minister’s visit, our lives have changed for the better. The void of not having parents has been partly filled because we have someone to rely on. We are no longer subjected to any abuse and hunger. Most of the promises that were made by the Minister have been met, a lot has been done. I would appreciate it if we receive ongoing assistance and a house from government as we are living with relatives,” said Ngcobo.

Ntombela said she is delighted to be at school. “I will work hard and pass my grade so I can further my studies and become a Chartered Accountant. Minister Muthambi’s intervention made me return to school and I do not foresee any challenges that could make me drop out of school again,” she said.

Her family has also been receiving food vouchers from SASSA. She said the vouchers were helpful. She added that Minister Muthambi’s continuous visits have changed her perception about government. “The Minister has delivered on most promises she made. Our living conditions would still be the same if it was not for government.”

Ntombela also received her 18-month-old daughter’s social grant for the first time on 1 January 2015. She was unable to receive a social grant because her daughter did not have a birth certificate. “It has been a great start for me. Now I can afford to meet some of my child’s needs since I am receiving a grant,” she said. The DoC has also secured school uniforms through SASSA for the beneficiaries.



Luluma Yeko said:

“Basic needs such as water, sanitation and electricity prove to be a challenge in our area. We find it difficult to access these services.”



Vusimusi Thebe said:

“The escalation of crime in our community is a worrying factor. Our plea is that government appoints more police officers.”

OUTCOME 12: AN EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE AND DEVELOPMENT ORIENTED PUBLIC SERVICE AND AN EMPOWERED, FAIR AND INCLUSIVE CITIZENSHIP

Outreach campaign a success

By: Peter Titus: DoC, Western Cape



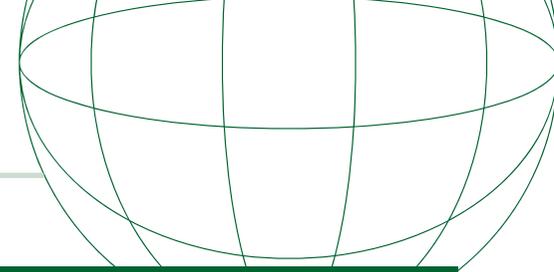
Participants of the door-to-door campaign attending a briefing on the methods and processes of engaging the public.

The core services that government provides (water, sanitation, electricity, shelter, waste removal, roads, etc.) are basic human rights and are essential components of the right to dignity that is enshrined in our Constitution. Local government must serve as a platform on which the reconstruction and development of our country and society will be built, a place where communities can directly engage with institutions of the state.

A door-to-door campaign took place in the community of Zwelethemba in the Eastern Cape on 29 January. The campaign was aimed at informing the community about services that are available at the Unobuntu Thusong Service Centre and also to find out about services that people desperately want. The campaign was determined to put people first and ensure constant contact with communities through effective public participation platforms.

Community members raised grievances concerning institutions that are tasked with advancing government’s key priorities. Institutions such as the South African Police Service, departments of labour and home affairs, and the local municipality will be engaged to respond to issues that were raised by the community of Zwelethemba.

The community also complained about poor service delivery that contradicts with the principles of *Batho Pele*. An urgent corrective meeting was held after the campaign to ensure that this information is shared with all Thusong Service Centre staff, thus ensuring that the community is treated with dignity and respect. Monthly report sessions have been planned to ensure that the community is served effectively.



OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION

Building for the future

By: Lwando Helesi: DoC, Eastern Cape



Deputy Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams addressing the gathering and handing over school backpacks.

The Deputy Minister of Communications, Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, says learners need to embrace information and communication technologies in order to have a brighter future.

The Department of Communications, in partnership with Vodacom, donated a cyber-lab with 26 tablets, a laptop, interactive whiteboard and two printers to Cunningham High School in Toleni Village, Butterworth in the Eastern Cape on 29 January.

The handover formed part of the back-to-school campaign to ensure that teaching and learning start in full effect for the year ahead.

Deputy Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams told the learners to use the cyber lab to access information that will assist them in their studies and secure their future.

The visit to Toleni by the Deputy Minister follows several government interventions to the village as it was once ravaged and terrorised by a serial rapist and killer who raped and murdered almost 20 women. “We felt the need to come here and donate these technologies to rebuild this community after the tragic events that occurred in the past. As government, we want the learners to be informed and educated so that they can change their community for the better, and shape the future of our country,” said the Deputy Minister.

This initiative was also supported by the South African Broadcasting Corporation, Tru FM and the Eastern Cape AIDS Council. The initiative will continue advancing education in the province, thus helping to improve matric results as these stakeholders also committed to support the school going forward. Vodacom donated school bags and stationery that were also given to Grade 1 learners from neighbouring schools around the village.



Deputy Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams demonstrating to the learners of Cunningham High School how to use the tablets.



Deputy Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams addressing the learners on the importance of the tablets and also officially opening the lab.