




MY DISTRICT TODAY



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

Conference tackles fraud and corruption

By Robbie Senoelo: GCIS, Gauteng

The fight against crime and corruption received a boost when the South African Social Security Agency (Sassa) hosted the 2nd Annual Anti-corruption Conference from 30 to 31 March 2015 at the St. George's Hotel in Irene, Pretoria. The conference was aimed at integrating efforts in the fight against fraud and corruption and was attended by 1 030 delegates. The event was done in line with one of government's key priorities of fighting crime and corruption. It focused on creating fraud awareness and targeted government employees and members of the public. There were exhibitions and distribution of information products by different stakeholders such as the Government Communication and Information System, Special Investigating Unit, departments of social development and justice and correctional service, and Legal Aid South Africa.

Social Development Minister Bathabile Dlamini said a total of 160 arrests have been made since the first Annual Anti-Corruption Conference in November 2013. Those who were arrested include officials from Sassa and Cash Paymaster Services, social grant beneficiaries and unaccredited financial providers.

"We are winning the fight against fraud and corruption and we will continue to learn and improve our systems so that we are not only reactive but also a step ahead of criminals who want to feed off the poor. We urge all South Africans not to keep quiet when they observe suspicious behaviour and to report it to us so that these allegations can be looked into. All of us have a role to play in fighting fraud and corruption. Let us speak out wherever we see it occurring," said the Minister. She also said that it is very disturbing that all incidents of fraud and corruption are perpetuated by the people entrusted with the responsibility to serve. These people connive with criminals to defraud members of the community.

Government has also identified duplication and fragmentation of benefits among the existing social security funds. This includes double-dipping, where a beneficiary may claim a disability benefit from Sassa while also claiming from the Compensation Fund or the Road Accident Fund for the same disability. It is hoped that the newly established Anti-fraud Unit will eradicate fraud and corruption within Sassa.



The GCIS stall at the Annual Anti-corruption Conference.

Julia Semono said:

"I have been looking for a copy of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and *Vuk'uzenzele* for so long. All these publications are valuable I wish I could take more for my family and neighbours."



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

Learners urged to stay away from crime

By Vasanthi Naidoo: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal



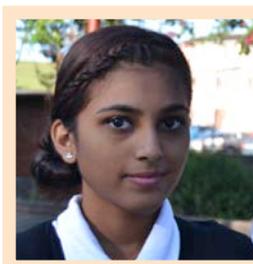
Naidoo addressing the learners during the event.



Warrant Officer Maharaj speaking to the learners.

The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and the Tongaat South African Police Service (SAPS) held a dialogue with learners from Buffelsdale Secondary School in KwaZulu-Natal on 12 May 2015. The school is situated among flats and attended by learners from poor backgrounds. Issues such as unemployment, substance abuse, domestic and gender-based violence are serious problems in the community.

The dialogues addressed issues concerning domestic violence and crime in general. Young people were advised to stay away from criminal activities. Learners were encouraged to make good choices and concentrate on their education. The team consisted of Senior Public Prosecutor and Communication Officer, Naidoo, Monica Nyuswa from the NPA and Warrant Officer Manisha Maharaj from Tongaat SAPS. The school was recently affected by learner protests against rumours of educators being moved. A small group of learners burned down the sound system and library books. Learners were advised against being destructive and urged to employ constructive methods when raising their concerns. They were also taught about the importance of education as a way to improve their lives and help them stay away from criminal activities.



Alyia Osman said:

"I thought the programme was very beneficial to my value system, beliefs and what I already know. It was very motivating and inspiring because it reminded us of who we are and how important education is. We were taught to treat education with respect because not everyone is as fortunate as we are. I also learned that Child Protection Week is from 31 May to 7 June. The SAPS reminded us that they are there for us if we need someone to talk to. Knowing that there are people who care about us and believe in us gives us hope."



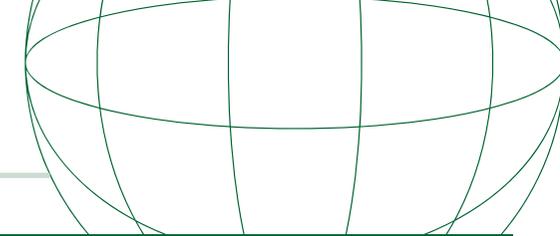
Nicholas Shabalala said:

"The programme motivated us. Education should be valued. I learned that destroying school resources has a bad impact on us and future learners. Going forward, learners will be encouraged to report complaints to the Representative Council of Learners and these grievances will be raised with the educators and principals. The programme has encouraged me to make good choices and value education."



Nicolene Shabalala said:

"I have learned that if we need our problems to be addressed, we must not protest and vandalise property. Teachers are there for us and the SAPS too. I learned that we must first think and make choices that will not be harsh or hurt us or others. I did not know that the Child Protection Week is celebrated from 31 May to 7 June. Children must be protected and not abused. If anyone is abusing a child, that person must be reported to the SAPS."



Maleka from the GIZ directing the programme



An official from the GIZ facilitating the discussions.



Msizi Myeni leading the first group discussion and writing inputs from group members.



Nkosi leading the second group discussion while Nondumiso Buthelezi writes down the inputs from group members.

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

Municipality reinforces communication and public participation

By Bongani Mazibuko: GCIS, Mpumalanga.

Mkhondo Local Municipality is developing one strategy for communication and public participation. This follows the transformational changes in the municipality that saw the communication and the public participation units merged. The strategy will, among other things, assist the municipality to implement public-participation programmes and also communication activities. The two units will also complement and enhance each other's mandate. The management and oversight role will also be efficient.

The municipality is located in the deep rural areas in the Gert Sibande District, Mpumalanga. It is the same municipality in which Rural Development and Land Reform Minister Gugile Nkwinti launched the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme in October 2009. Developing the communication and public participation strategy and its actual implementation will also help improve the two-way communication between the municipality and communities. A lot of developmental strides have been made so far.

On 15 May 2015, an interactive workshop to develop a single strategy for communication and public participation strategy was held. It involved communicators from the municipality, Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, and other stakeholders such as Mondi and the German Internationals Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

The municipality's Communications and Public Participation Manager Musa Shongwe made a presentation on the current state of affairs concerning communication in the municipality. Jeremiah Nkosi from the GCIS gave a presentation titled: "The Role of Communication in Government". The presentation focused on the role of communication at national, provincial and local government. With this presentation, the GCIS also continued to fulfil its mandate of providing leadership and guidance in developing communication strategies. Apart from the presentations, the discussions were engaging and constructive towards the development of the strategy.

"There will be another session in June and this is work in progress and our partnership with the municipality will continue for some time until our support bears fruits," said Mokgapi Maleka from the GIZ. Shongwe concluded by thanking all stakeholders for their support and inputs.



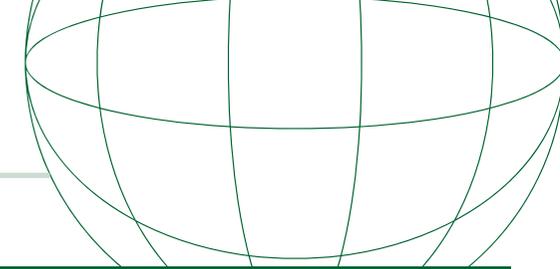
Jeremiah Nkosi from GCIS Mpumalanga Provincial Office gave a presentation titled "The Role of Communication in Government".



Bongani Mazibuko reporting back the inputs from the first group discussion.



Delegates listening to the report of inputs from the second group discussion.



Deputy Minister Magwanishe cuts the ribbon, surrounded by different dignitaries.



Deputy Minister Magwanishe and CEO Mona opened the plaque as other dignitaries watch.



Chief Kutama giving words of appreciation.

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

Deputy Minister hands over a community hall and a borehole

By Doctrine Netshikweta: GCIS, Limpopo

Public Enterprises Deputy Minister Gratitude Magwanishe officially handed over a borehole and a community hall to the community of Tshitavha in Makhado Local Municipality on 11 April 2015.

The modern community hall, valued at R3 million, was donated by the Komatiland Forests as part of ploughing back to the community. The CEO of the South African Forest Company, Nomkhita Mona, said they had received a request for the construction of a community hall three years ago through the joint community forum from Radzilani in Vhulaudzi.

“We have conducted a feasibility study to test if the need was of critical importance and the degree of impact it would have on the community. The study revealed that there was a dire need for the hall as the community did not have a decent or conducive venue to hold meetings and host events,” said Mona.

“We also took into consideration the fact that there is a need for government institutions such as the departments of home affairs and health, and South African Social Security Agency to have offices and render basic services at the community hall. We have agreed as a company to plough back to the community by building the hall that has the capacity to accommodate approximately 1 000 people,” she continued.

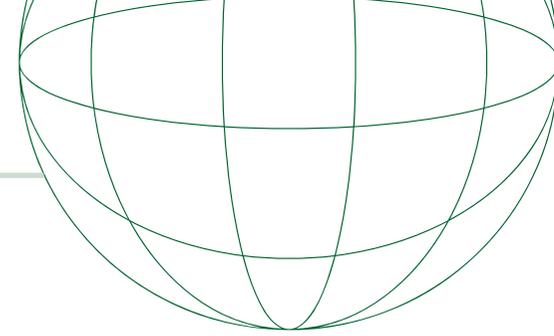
The project was done in the form of black economic empowerment.

“We have employed a local contractor called Anolanga Engineering and this created 19 job opportunities for local residents,” she added. The project funding also covered the building of toilets, borehole and electricity installation, and also furnished the hall with 500 chairs.

The community leader, headmaster Radzilani applauded the good work done by Komatiland Forests. “Today I am very happy that the Deputy Minister has officially handed over such a beautiful gift to my community. I am happy that my community will no longer endure rain and heat when they are waiting for their social grants. It was very sad to see senior citizens collapsing while queuing for grants. All that will be history and thank you to Komatiland Forests. May god bless you,” he said.

“My people will no longer stand in long queues while waiting for their grants and travel long distances to access government services because government departments will render services in the hall while people are seated,” said Chief Kutama on behalf of King Mphephu Ramabulana.

Deputy Minister Magwanishe said that there was still a need to improve the lives of the people in rural areas. He also commended the good work done by the Radzilani community of standing up and do it for themselves. He also advised villagers to take care of the infrastructure.



CEO Mona thanked community members for requesting the community hall.



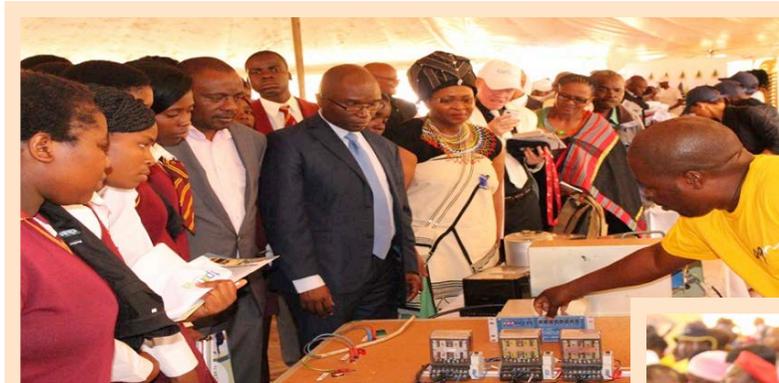
Vhembe Executive Mayor Tshitereke Matibe urged the community to take care of the hall and use water sparingly.



Deputy Minister Magwanishe giving a keynote address.

“It must be your responsibility to ensure that the hall is always in good condition. Promote the culture of protecting your property. If someone vandalises the property, inform the relevant officials and the police about the incident. That way, we will keep this hall in a perfect condition. Community members should preserve water and never leave the tap running,” said the Deputy Minister.

Various State-owned companies exhibited their skills development programmes to the youth. Stakeholders such as Eskom, Transnet and Denel used this opportunity to share information on careers and bursaries available for the youth. Young people were encouraged to take their lives seriously by applying for bursaries to further their studies.



The Deputy Minister, other dignitaries and learners watching a demonstration at Eskom's stall.



Members of the community attended the event.