Municipality intensifies fight against fraud and corruption
By Tshidi Mokoka: GCIS, Gauteng

Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in partnership with Rand West City Local Municipality hosted an anti-corruption dialogue at the Council Chamber on 28 March 2019. The dialogue targeted internal officials in the municipality, including Supply Chain Management, Internal Audit and those involved in tender processes.

Presenting at the dialogue were officials from the Hawks and the State Security Agency. Brigadier Zama Basi, Section Head of Anti-Corruption Investigation in the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, engaged officials on the type of cases that his unit investigates. “It is imperative that existing security systems in the municipality are interrogated at all times. When people don’t follow legal processes, they contravene a particular law and they then get investigated,” he said. He explained that one of the directorate’s key objectives is to establish and maintain partnerships with relevant stakeholders such as municipalities to assist them to create awareness and expand the detection of serious crimes.

Edwin Mashitoa from the State Security Agency said that they work closely with municipalities to make sure that officials in positions that can be easily targeted by those ready to commit fraud and corruption are educated on how and where to report such cases. “Risk management in municipalities must be at the centre of an anti-corruption strategy. A security risk committee, if put in place, can correct certain issues relating to fraud and corruption happening within a municipality. This means it will be easier to identify and report those who are on a mission to commit crime,” he said.

Rand West City Local Municipality Chief Operations Officer, Larry Steyn, said the city is doing its best to fight crimes such as fraud and bribery through anti-corruption campaigns. “The small contribution that we can make as officials is to continue the fight against corruption and by so doing we help communities, because they will see our efforts and have trust that the money they pay contributes to improved service delivery and not acts of corruption,” he said.
Thabo Phokojoe said: 
"The discussions held today will help us grow in the duties that we do as officials in the municipality. Every day we deal with projects that involve a lot of money from communities and business. It is imperative that in our dealings with these projects we free ourselves from being involved in fraudulent and corrupt activities."

Hlengiwe Sithole said: 
"I am happy with all the information we received from the dialogue today. It will certainly go a long way in boosting the morale of the staff and they will do better in their work for the municipality. The dialogue also ensured that officials know the avenues they can employ to report acts of corruption."

Geoffrey Matjiu said: 
"As a municipality we are happy with how the dialogue went. Presenters that we invited touched on topics that were relevant to the job that we conduct. Colleagues were also able to interact and ask questions to seek clarity on issues not understood."
OUTCOME 6: AN EFFICIENT, COMPETITIVE AND RESPONSIVE ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK.

Handover of equipment to small businesses
By Masego Mollo, GCIS Northern Cape

On 16 April 2019, the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) hosted Small Business Development Minister Lindiwe Zulu for the handing over of the Informal and Micro Enterprise Development Programme (IMEDP) equipment to qualifying small enterprises in Warrenton, Northern Cape. The machinery was distributed to qualifying businesses in the Sol Plaatje, Magareng, Dikgatlong and Phokwane local municipalities. Beneficiaries thanked the government, SEDA and other stakeholders for supporting their businesses. “It was indeed a long journey. It took us a long time for our businesses to be where they are today. We are truly grateful to SEDA, the Department of Tourism as well as the local municipality,” said one of the beneficiaries, Lennie Motumi.

The Northern Cape Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Economic Development and Tourism, Mack Jack also attended the ceremony. He said there was a great need for a youth entrepreneurial fund as it was government’s responsibility to support young entrepreneurs. “In order for Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises to respond to the question of creating jobs, as government we have to develop and support them,” said the MEC. He further requested Minister Zulu to consider making a provision for the entrepreneurial fund before the new administration in June.

The IMEDP is an initiative of the Department of Small Business Development. It aims to provide equipment and machinery needed by the small enterprises.
OUTCOME 4: DECENT EMPLOYMENT THROUGH INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH.

Job creation workshop for small businesses
By Nkopodi Mokgoma: GCIS, Limpopo

The Limpopo Provincial Treasury in partnership with Government Communication and Information System, the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, held a workshop for upcoming business people at Jane Furse on 11 April 2019.

The aim of the workshop was to empower aspiring and small business people with skills and knowledge on how to grow their businesses in order to contribute to the country’s economy. Speaking to delegates, the Manager of the Provincial Treasury in Sekhukhune District, Sehale Maiza, said: “You need to learn more and grow your companies and help government to employ more people as you can see that the majority of young people are unemployed.” He further stated that government alone cannot absorb all the unemployed people in the country.

SARS officials taught the delegates how to submit tax returns online through e-filing. Attendees also learnt about the procedures and processes of how to market, profile and sustain their businesses.

Magakwe Simon said: “The information I received during this workshop will help me to improve my piggery business that I have already started.”

Maila Moshidi said: “It is important to have workshops like this as they keep us up to date with the latest development in business.”

Sydney Selala said: “I learnt a lot during this workshop, especially on how to create a business profiles online.”
On 26 and 27 March 2019, Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) partnered with other government departments to render services to the community of Rubida and Leeufontein Farm outside Zastron in the Free State. This was a follow up visit after GCIS held a State of the Nation Address live-viewing event at the farm in February 2019. It was realised on the initial visits that the farm community did not have access to government information and services.

More than 90 farm workers attended the event. Various Government departments, including GCIS, Human Settlements, Labour, Health, Home Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform, Agriculture, and public entities such as the South Africa Social Security Agency, Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, South African Police Service, and National Prosecuting Authority were present to render services. Officials addressed some of the challenges faced by the communities and promised to give feedback on issues that needed further consultation.

Mpho Modibedi said:
“I am very thankful about the event that happened today at the farm as most of us don't have sites nor houses, so I think the information we received will help us when we apply for services.”

Matshediso Tshokolo said:
“I learnt a lot from today’s session as I now know the procedures to follow when you get married and change the child’s surname. I even received seeds to plant in my garden. A big thanks to all the departments.”