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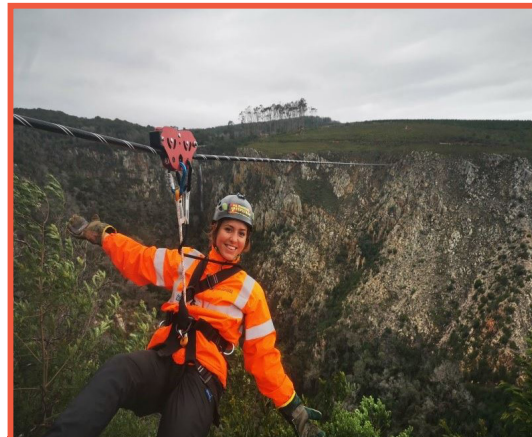
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PRIORITY 2: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Knysna Ziplines to boost tourism

By Jethro Grootboom: GCIS, Western Cape



Members of the public during an adventure at the Knysna ziplines.

SANParks has launched another thrill-seeking product to boost tourism in the Garden Route. The Knysna Ziplines offer breath-taking views of the sea and forest at 250 metres above the Kranshoek gorge between Knysna and Plettenberg Bay. The Garden Route's longest and highest zipline is ready for those scouting for an exhilarating expedition.

Speaking at the project launch at Harkerville, on 14 September 2020, the general manager of the Garden Route National Park, Vuyiswa Thabethe said, "The zipline product aims to boost tourism and socio-economic benefits to the local and regional area, in keeping with SANParks vision of a sustainable national parks system, connecting society."

The launch formed part of Tourism Month celebrations and kicked off with experienced adventure guides, who are highly trained in safety procedures, sourced from other SA Forest Adventures sites. They will train and mentor new staff to be recruited from the neighbouring Kranshoek, Knysna and Plettenberg Bay areas, with about 15 new jobs to be created altogether, which will boost the local economy.



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Material and products used in the project were sourced locally in South Africa apart from the specially imported recycled plastic material used for the lines and specialised zipline equipment. Plastic cables greatly reduce noise, an important aspect of operating within the tranquil environment of a national park.

Managing Director of SA Forest Adventures, Clint Lerm, says the zipline is 2.2 kilometres in length and will start operating with four lines, increasing to six lines by the end of the year.

Park Manager for Knysna, Megan Taplin, said, “We are very excited to add environmentally friendly adventure products, which will attract more visitors to our park and complement the existing popular hiking and mountain bike trails.”

The zipline product is expected to double the number of local and international visitors to Knysna. It opened for visitors on 18 September 2020.



Vuyokazi Nkanjeni said:

“I have done quite a few adventures but this one is unique. You definitely have to come and try it for yourself. At first, I was a bit nervous but I convinced myself that I could do it again. The thrills you get, are just awesome. Here you get four times to zipline for the price of one.”



Clinton Lerm said:

“These are definitely a jewel in this beautiful forest of Knysna. It is the highest, longest zipline in South Africa.”



Community based planners recruits posing with government leaders.



Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality Speaker Patric Masiu addressing the recruits.

PRIORITY 2: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Community based planners induction

By Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality

The Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality, through the Office of the Speaker is currently in the process of inducting community based planners (CBPs) for the current financial year 2020/21. The first of the induction ceremonies was held at JB Marks Council Chamber in Potchefstroom on 29 September 2020. The CBP structures are supported by local government, sector departments and local municipalities. Other municipal areas to have commenced with this programme include all wards in the City of Matlosana and Maquassi Hills local municipalities.

The programme seeks to improve the quality of local government plans and sector departments, services rendered by municipalities and sector departments and the community's control over development. It also strives to ensure that communities become active agents in their own development. This is done through strengthening the bottom-up approach to planning and service delivery by people participating directly in joint needs analysis, action planning, and implementation of interventions.

To address challenges faced by local communities, the programme promotes the formation or strengthening of local organisations through the usage of participatory planning tools, used with different community groups and also identifying and prioritising the desired outcomes. The approach is aligned with the National Development Plan, which is based on sustainable livelihood principles.

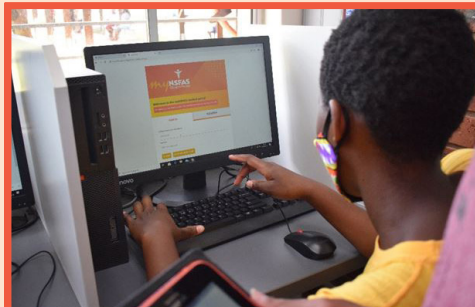
The plan is people-focused and empowering through focusing on the livelihoods of the different community groups, and facilitating a planning process for communities to produce their own plans for their own development. This approach results in a strong feeling of ownership by the community.

"This approach builds on strengths and opportunities, of the place and people, not problems. This will increase the likelihood of success without people being paralysed by the seemingly overwhelming list of problems. The plans are holistic and cover all sectors that are relevant to each community. The planning process promotes mutual accountability between the community and government," said Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality Speaker, Councillor Patric Masiu. He also said much was expected from the inductees, as they would be required to be "at all material times on the ground addressing the plight of their communities". He warned the recruits to adhere to the rules as set in the induction contracts. "I expect a professional outcomes-based interaction between you, your coordinators, management and the communities," he said.

The CBP programme will employ 93 people comprising, 84 field workers and nine coordinators for a period of 12 months.



The eThekweni Municipality Academy Unit engaging with the youth on available employment opportunities.



A local resident applying for opportunities at the centre.

PRIORITY 2: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Annual Thusong Service Centre Week activities

By Lihle Nxumalo: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal



The leaders of eThekweni Municipality engaging with delegates.



An official from eThekweni Business Support Unit engaging with various stakeholders.

To commemorate Public Service Month and Annual Thusong Service Centre Week, Mnini Thusong Service Centre in eThekweni Municipality invited centre managers from all over KwaZulu-Natal to be part of a benchmarking exercise and share best practices, focusing on how to coordinate, organise and run Annual Thusong Service Centre Week activities.

This was one of the activities that took place on 18 September 2020 to close off the Annual Thusong Service Centre Week. The session saw best practices being shared, robust engagements took place and it ended with a tour around the centre. It was a successful initiative which was appreciated by all attendees.

Mnini Thusong Service Centre hosted a variety of activities including two radio interviews on Mbokodo FM and Izwi Lomzansi FM; an information sharing session with stakeholders that are based at the centre; motorcade and a loud hailer to inform communities about services and youth engagement session to assist the youth with online applications.

On 18 September 2020, there was a parallel programme which focused on the youth. The eThekweni Municipality together with the Government Communication and Information System, and Thuto Pele, held a youth engagement session where young people were assisted with online applications for National Student Financial Aid Scheme, Central Applications Office and any employment opportunities available. This initiative will continue until 30 November 2020.

PRIORITY 5: SPATIAL INTEGRATION, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Centre brings hope to rural communities

By Phiwo Zokufa: GCIS, Eastern Cape



The distribution of flyers at Tombo Thusong Service Centre.



Sinethemba Jico explaining government services to a community member.

Tombo Thusong Service Centre in the Eastern Cape, was established and operationalised in 1999 as the first integrated government service shop in a rural setting. Established to offer public services, and access to information and government services, the centre has become a booming hub of small business initiatives.

It continues to offer government services to the people of Tombo and the surrounding areas. As part of the 2020 Public Service Month, the Government Communication and Information System in partnership with non-governmental organisations and community development workers celebrated the Annual Thusong Service Centre Week in Tombo on 15 September 2020.

“The centre does contribute to the community because we no longer go to town to access our social grants,” said Chithiwe Dawusha. She further stated that her wish is for the centre to go back to where it used to be, wherein young people were able to print their CVs and also apply for jobs. “We really hope our municipality renovates the centre so that it can operate to its full capacity like it used to,” she added.

The Annual Thusong Service Centre Week awareness campaign involved the distribution of pamphlets, awareness campaigns on COVID-19, providing community support and access to government information and opportunities for young people.