

DID YOU KNOW?

August is Women's Month. The Theme for this year's celebrations is "A Centenary of Working Together Towards Sustainable Women Empowerment and Gender Equality."



MY DISTRICT TODAY

Issue no. 75 / July 2013

CONTACT DETAILS OF THE GCIS PROVINCIAL OFFICES

For more information about similar programmes that are run across the country, contact one of the following provincial offices:

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

Kokomeng Village receives government services

By Fatima Modise: GCIS North West



Home Affairs providing services to the community of Kokomeng.



The Office of the Public Protector addressing the community.

On 31 July 2013, GCIS and the Greater Taung Local Municipality joined forces and recruited various departments with the aim of taking government services closer to the rural community of Kokomeng Village and neighbouring villages through a service blitz. Kokomeng Village was targeted because it is more than 50 kilometres from Taung. In addition, there are no government departments in the area and the Thusong Service Center is currently not operating. People there-

fore have to travel long distances to access basic government services.

Full services were rendered by the Department of Home Affairs; SEDA; the Public Protector, the Department of Social Development, the Department of Women, Children, and People with Disability; SAPS; Thuthuzela Care Centre and the GCIS Taung Office using Kokomeng Thusong Service Centre.

"I am humbled and excited about the services rendered here today," said Chief Motlhabane from Kokomeng Village. "We are looking forward to receive more of these events in our village that change the lives of our people. A big thank you to all the departments who saw it fit to come and help our village," he added.



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DID YOU KNOW?

**In 2012/13 we had
12 433 949 learners in over
25 000 schools.**

OUTCOME 10: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS AND NATURAL RESOURCES THAT ARE WELL PROTECTED AND CONTINUALLY ENHANCED

Healthy environment, healthy mind

By Maria Ramoshaba: GCIS Limpopo



Social Worker Christina Pilane and Municipal administrator Johanna Mafora agree that a clean environment will attract more clients to visit the Thusong Service Centre.



Service providers cleaning the areas surrounding the Mabatlane Thusong Service Centre.

A healthy environment plays an important role in safeguarding people lives from allergies and sicknesses. Litter and pollution can affect quality of life. Mabatlane Thusong stakeholders therefore took time out of their busy schedules to clean the yard and surrounding areas. They were assisted by helpers from the Department of Social Development (Community Development and Social Work services); the Department of Agriculture; the Limpopo Department of Co-operative Governance,

Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs; and the Modimolle Local Municipality.

The purpose of the event was to make people understand the importance of a clean environment and surroundings. This was done to ensure that clients would be served in a clean environment and service providers would be working under healthy conditions to increase productivity.

The event was also aimed at making the community aware that litter and pollution negatively affect the image of an institution. People will not want to visit the Thusong Centre to access services in an unhealthy environment and communities should know and understand that littering is unacceptable behaviour.

DID YOU KNOW?

Grade R enrolments have more than doubled between 2003 and 2011.



Members of the Northern Cape Executive Council responding to the issues that arose in Calvinia.



Community members of Fraserburg raising their concerns with the Northern Cape Government.

OUTCOME 9: RESPONSIVE, ACCOUNTABLE, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

Northern Cape Executive Council Outreach Programme to Namakwa

By Geoffery Van Der Merwe: GCIS Northern Cape

The Northern Cape Executive Council reached out to the communities of Hantam, Karoo-Hoogland and Kareeberg municipal areas to listen to the concerns of community members in the form of door-to-door visits and town hall meetings.

The Northern Cape was one of the first provinces to implement programmes where government goes out to communities to address the public's needs and challenges.

The Executive Council acted immediately where urgent interventions such as blankets for the elderly, food parcels and vouchers for school uniforms were needed. They even relocated households whose living conditions in the area proved to be a health risk. Premier Sylvia Lucas said it was very sad to see the poor conditions people were still living in after visiting several families in Fraserburg.

Teams led by the Premier, Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and government officials from all departments visited 180 homes.

The outreaches ensured that the provincial government was well-informed about people's problems and created a platform for communities to raise their dissatisfaction.

Similar visits to other provincial districts are expected to follow to ensure that government services are rendered and the living conditions of people are improved.



MEC Mack Jack visiting an elderly couple in Nieuwoudtville where they are renting a shack.



GCIS created a platform for Premier Sylvia Lucas to address communities at Radio Kuboesna in Calvinia, informing them of the Cabinet's Outreach Programme and Youth Month.



Premier Sylvia Lucas handing over blankets to needy families in Fraserburg.



The Calvinia Town Hall meeting where community members were provided with the opportunity to raise their concerns.

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

DID YOU KNOW?
The move towards universal Grade R is a key achievement in the education system.



Celebrating our women's liberation

Phumla Williams, Acting CEO: GCIS

Since the onset of democracy, South Africa has taken bold steps to advance the interests of women. Today we can look back with pride at some of the many strides we have made, particularly as we prepare to celebrate 20 years of democracy and freedom.

South Africa has moved from apartheid where women suffered triple oppression based on their gender, colour and class, to a society where gender equality is now a constitutional imperative.

While the policies of apartheid were detrimental to the entire black population, women were the most affected. Apartheid restrictions on African women forced them to remain in the homelands, supporting their families without the help of men.

They faced poor living conditions, extreme poverty, malnutrition, illness and high infant mortality. Every effort was made to keep African women out of urban areas through laws and regulations that governed their movement.

It was these restrictions, in particular the pass laws which required Africans to carry documents allowing them to be in white-occupied areas, that led to the famous 1956 march by 20 000 women to the Union Buildings.

Today, under our democratically elected government, our Constitution informs our work, promotes, protects and advances the rights of women. President Jacob Zuma said this constitutional imperative was further reinforced by our progressive legislation to advance women.

These legal instruments, he noted, included the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, the Employment Equity Act, the Domestic Violence Act, Maintenance Act, the Sexual Offences Act and the Civil Union Act.

Recognising that August is Women's Month, we take stock of some of the advances we have made in empowering women. We also celebrate the achievements of women in our society.

The Government recently proposed the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill to enforce gender parity across all sectors of society. This demonstrates our commitment to act decisively, enforce change in the workplace and speed up the process of gender transformation.

The proposed Bill calls for equal participation of women in the economy and for equal representation in decision-making in the private and public sectors. The proposed Bill comes at a time when gender transformation in our corporate board-

rooms continues at a much slower pace than in government.

The 2012 Business Women in Leadership Census shows that while women make up 52% of the population they account for just 3,6% of chief executives, 5,5 % of chairpersons, 17,1% of directors and 21,4% of executive managers.

The president of the Business Women's Association, Kunyalala Maphisa said: "Essentially, the findings of the census show that we have a long way to go to achieve more equality in the upper levels of the workplace. The advancement of women in South Africa is no longer an option, it is an urgent requirement."

The Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill provides for the elimination of practices that violate the rights of women in terms of social, political, economic and cultural freedoms and the abolition of discrimination against women and girls.

It will also monitor all legislation to address inequalities, discrimination against women, gender violence, access to services and economic empowerment.

While our laws have been enacted to promote gender equality and women empowerment, the issue should not be viewed by the private and public sector simply as compliance.

Gender equality must become a lived reality to enable a societal shift that ensures that women are treated as equal citizens, and contribute to socio-economic growth and development. The transformation of gender disparities requires the commitment from all to deal with the historical gender discrimination within our communities.

Our National Development Plan (NDP) – the country's strategic vision for the next 20 years – highlights the important role of women in the fight against poverty and transformation of our economy.

The active participation and empowerment of women will help to transform the economy as they make up a significant percentage of the poor, particularly in rural areas.

Our record of the last 19 years of democracy suggests that with a concerted effort we can build on the advances we have made which have enabled women to construct better lives for themselves and their children. The government has ensured that all laws that assist in the transformation of society, particularly those that relate to women, are in place. The challenge however, is the willingness by all to comply with

them.

The government has done its bit in tackling gender imbalances in the public sector. The public sector has 40,7% female senior managers. The overall workforce in the public service consists of 60,6% women up from 58,2% in 2011.

Furthermore, research shows that South Africa is one of the most progressive countries in the world when it comes to the representation of women in politics.

Before 1994, the Parliament had a mere 2,7% representation of women. After our first democratic elections in 1994 women representation in the National Assembly stood at 27,7%.

In 1999 that figure increased to 30% and then 32,7% in 2004. After the 2009 national elections women's representation rose again to reach 42%.

According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2012, this puts South Africa in fourth position worldwide for the greatest number of women in Parliament.

In the national executive, we have 14 Cabinet Ministers and 16 Deputy Ministers. In addition, five out of nine premiers are women. The government remains determined to meet its 50-50 target on women's representation.

While we celebrate our many successes in advancing women in our democratic journey, the government understands that more needs to be done to ensure that women feel safe.

The daily reports of violence and abuse suffered by women are evidence that we must continually work to ensure a safer and more caring society. We urge communities to help government to eradicate violence against women through reporting such crimes. Domestic violence in particular should not be treated as a private matter. It is a crime and must be reported to the police.

As a nation we must unite towards creating a safer environment for all women and ensure they take their equal place in the workplace and elsewhere to enable us to reach our full potential.

Phumla Williams is acting CEO of the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)

OUTCOME 7: VIBRANT, EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES AND FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012 gross enrolment at primary schools shows the country having achieved close to universal access to primary education for both genders. Enrolment for the five-year-old age group which was at 22,5% at the 1996 Census leapt to 81,2% in 2011.

Mabatlane Thusong fights poverty and malnutrition with food gardens

By Maria Ramoshaba: GCIS Limpopo



Christina Mpete one of the beneficiaries of the Food Garden Project and social worker Christina Pilane.



Social Worker Christina Pilane, Jimmy Malepe from the Modimolle Local Municipality, and Lambert Moloto from the Department of Agriculture, establish a vegetable garden.

Communities living around Mabatlane Thusong Service Centre at Vaalwater fights poverty and starvation through food gardens. This came after the centre launched the Food Garden Project with the Department of Agriculture. Food gardens were established in each of the identified households after it was discovered that most families in the surrounding areas depended on social grants

According to Lambert Moloto from the Department of Agriculture, government can save a lot of money

by teaching people how to fish rather than giving them the fish.

“Simple initiatives like food gardens can turn people’s lives around”, he said. He encouraged communities to take charge of their lives and to improve their own well-being. He donated vegetables to each household, assisted in planting vegetable seedlings and educated the community on how to look after their food gardens.

Christina Mpete and social worker Christina Pilane both voiced their appreciation for the assistance and said it would bring much relief to the community. “We used to rely on freebees from government to make ends meet, but this could be a thing of the past. Thank you to Mabatlane Thusong Service Centre’s management for starting this project”, said Christina Mpete.

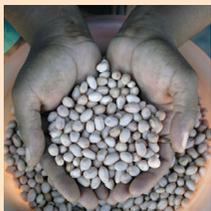


DID YOU KNOW?

School enrolment for the six-year-old age group, was 49,1% in 1996 and 92,7% in 2011.



From left: The secretary of the school governing body, Jamela Mashaba with the principal of the school Mmabatho Khosa and Evans Machitela, the CWP coordinator.



OUTCOME 7: VIBRANT, EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES AND FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL

Organic farming helps feed a rural village in Limpopo

By Odas Ngoben: GCIS Limpopo

A school principal in the rural village of Khujwana, Limpopo, has taken it upon herself to ensure that no child in the village goes to bed on an empty stomach.

Mmabatho Khosa, principal at Shikhati Primary School, introduced organic farming at the school after receiving training in planting through the permaculture method from a Johannesburg-based company, Food and Trees for Africa. She fertilizes her garden using compost made from dry leaves and manure.

“We don’t buy fertilizers; we use what many in our communities believe to be waste including animal excrements. We have goats and indigenous chickens here at the school, and we use their excrements as well as dry leaves as compost in our garden, she says.

“The school’s garden has lots of tomatoes, cabbage, spinach, and butternuts. A large section of the garden also has herbs such as mint, lavender, rosemary, fennel and comfrey. The garden also has the famous moringa tree, whose leaves are believed to be rich in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, which have health benefits such as lowering high blood pressure.”

Whatever is reaped from the harvest is used to feed learners at the school, as well as orphans in the

village. The surplus is sold to the public to generate income for the school, which is mostly used to buy uniforms for needy learners.

“We do have plans to start an organic nursery. This initiative has helped the community to learn the importance of organic farming, which is not only good for the environment, but also for our general health,” says Khosa.

“We have had tremendous support from members of the Community Works Programme (CWP), who are always willing to assist in our garden, whether it is in watering or the actual planting. We are proud to say this garden is making a difference in the lives of many orphans in this community,” she adds.

Khosa is now mentoring more than 100 schools in the Greater Tzaneen municipal area. “We have received a R2 million sponsorship from Pioneer Foods Limited which is to be shared by 16 identified schools. The identified schools also received soccer kits from Dreamfields Project,” she says.

In 2011, Khosa won the national community nutrition award from Nestlé for promoting school gardens, with prize money of R15 000. In the same year, she was the first runner-up in the young aspirant farmer’s awards in Mopani District. She did even better in 2012 when she was named the winner in the Edu-plant national schools competi-

tion, sponsored by ABSA, Woolworths and Engen.

Jamela Mashaba, the secretary of the school governing body at the school, says Khosa was God sent. “The community has learned the importance of organic farming since she joined the school in 2008, and we are saving a lot of money because we are no longer buying fertilizers. We have realized the importance of having these animals around, which we previously thought to be a hazard in our gardens.

“We have also learned how to use different herbs. It is through her training that we know how to apply these herbs. For instance, we know that bunches of lavender can be used to repel insects such as mosquitoes in our homes, and we also know that fennel is good for men’s health,” she says jokingly.

Evans Machitela, the coordinator of the CWP in the area says they continue to learn from Khosa and will assist her as she takes this method of farming to the other schools in the region. “We are so pleased as members of the community to have a teacher that understands that parents and the general community have needs, and she is trying her very best to reach out and address our social welfare needs,” he says.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Census 2011 results show that individuals aged 20 and older, who have no schooling, halved from 19,1% in 1996 to 8,6% in 2011.



OUTCOME 5: A SKILLED AND CAPABLE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT AN INCLUSIVE GROWTH PATH

Improving rural development sanitation

By Ephraim Malema: GCIS North West



Community members employed in the EPWP building a toilet in Flensdrift in the Moretele Local Municipality.



83-year old Emily Raphiri appreciates the sanitation project.

The Bojanala District Municipality in North West has embarked on a new project to address the backlog of sanitation within its five local municipalities.

In his address to the North West Provincial Basic Services Acceleration Summit recently, the executive mayor of Bojanala District Municipality, Councillor Louis Diremelo, said R6 million had been allocated to the sanitation project.

There are 5 485 households in Moretele Local Municipality who are beneficiaries of the R255 million sanitation projects under construction in the

villages. The toilet project is carried out as part of rural development initiatives in the area.

The sanitation project is aimed at improving the quality of life of the rural communities and also create employment for the unemployed youth through the Expanded Public Work Programme (EPWP) in the villages.

The sanitation project will also promote a healthy life style among people who live in rural areas and stop the spreading of infectious diseases.

The 83-year old Emily Raphiri from Flensdrift in Moretele Local Municipality, is very happy to have a new toilet at her home. "A toilet is very important in my life. I must thank President Zuma even though he has never come to our village. He is the one who is doing this wonderful job," she said.

Many villagers within the Moretele Local Municipality firmly believe that the sanitation project brings back dignity and respect to villagers and allows them to break out of the cycle of poverty and hopelessness.