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## PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

### Awareness campaign on people living with albinism

By Tshidi Mokoka: GCIS, Gauteng

On Friday, 18 October 2019, the Department of Social Development (DSD) in Mogale City Local Municipality conducted an information sharing session in Krugersdorp to create awareness on challenges faced by people with albinism. The activation was conducted as part of the Social Development Month. Stakeholders and various government departments highlighted the services they offer and how they can be accessed and used by people living with albinism.

Ms Precious Nxumula from the DSD said the activation was meant to ensure that community members are educated on what albinism is. "There are myths that are being circulated in communities we live in about albinism. It is painful to hear what is being said about them and beliefs that people still hold about albinism. Our hope, as a department, is to educate and spread the word that they are not different and should be embraced in the communities they live in," she said.

It was noted that one of the most difficult part that people with albinism go through is during their schooling years as most of them are short-sighted and need to be closer to objects to see what is written on them. Participants resolved that teachers should be urged to communicate such cases with relevant authorities who should provide a solution.

A member of the Albinism Renaissance Forum, Mr Masilo Tampe, outlined challenges that they go through. "There is nothing as expensive as the skin of a person living with albinism. We need eyewear to enable us to see and read better when in class. So for a person from a disadvantaged community and who



Participants listening to different stakeholders at the event.



Mr Gcina Sithole, an Educational Psychologist from Department of Education, engaging the audience.



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is further unemployed, this is a bit difficult as they are unable to afford this. We are pleading with stakeholders such as the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) and the Department of Health to help us in this as our condition has been declared a disability; to provide us with grants and resources that we need to protect ourselves from skin cancer and other skin-related diseases."

Participants included representatives from the departments of Health, Education, Employment and Labour, the Mogale City Social Services, Community Development Workers and SASSA.



#### Ikqopoleng Rankudu said:

"Our purpose as the DSD is to create awareness on albinism. People with albinism deserve to live without fear or discrimination. We hope that stakeholders will work hard in providing services that will help people with albinism and improve their lives for the better. A way forward will be developed from the solutions that were raised during commissions to hold departments to account and push them to prioritise services they give to people with albinism."



#### Masilo Tampe said:

"It is important what we have sessions like this to make sure that we are seen to be serious in our demand for services from the government. We hope that government will work with us to improve situations that we often encounter in our everyday lives."



#### Puleng Mogagabe said:

"I have two children with albinism. It was important that I attend this session to engage with Department of Education so that I can hear what they do to assist children with albinism in their schools. I am happy with what was presented to us and now we have contacts in these departments who are here today who we will get in touch with to assist us in overcoming some of the challenges we encounter as parents for our children to succeed in life."



**Mathengi Mchunu said:**

"It's my first time here and I am happy to join other women on this celebration."



**Gloria Johnson said:**

"I believe this day is a blessing to me since it is coinciding with my birthday. I am happy to be part of the senior citizen community within Dundee. My social grant is still very helpful to my family's needs."



**Ntombizodwa Buthelezi said:**

"I was not aware that it's our month but today is very precious. We were told to secure our social grants. We are pleased to have a caring government at all times looking after our needs."

## PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

### Social Development Month with senior citizens

*By Thandinkosi Zulu: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal*

On 18 October 2019, more than 200 senior citizens from Endumeni in KwaZulu-Natal attended the Social Development Month celebrations at the Dundee Moth Hall. The event was held under the theme: "Working together to build caring and sustainable communities". The senior citizens had a long dialogue on social ills affecting them.

As part of Operation Sukuma Sakhe, various government departments, including the South African Police Service (SAPS), KwaZulu-Natal Sports and Recreation, South African Social Security Agency, Dundee Hospital and Social Development shared their support services with the senior citizens whose lives depend much on government services.

A Social Worker in the area, Ms Xolile Madonsela, said the event was aimed at upholding the human rights of older persons and to respond to their developmental needs as directed by the Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006). "Today we want to discuss issues impacting your lives as senior citizens. We brought a team of stakeholders to note some of the issues that will be discussed on Operation Sukuma Sakhe and be dealt with at a greater level," added Madonsela.

Dundee police representative, Captain Velabahleke Mbense, encouraged senior citizens to report any form of abuse they experience at their homes. "We are a welfare State and we want to make sure that we take care of your needs as senior citizens. Today, we want to make sure that no one is abusing your rights as senior citizens. Those taking your pensions will be dealt with accordingly if they are reported at our police station," said Captain Mbense.

Endumeni Municipality Councillor Emile Makaba urged senior citizens to use government platforms to report the violence and abuse. "Your well being is our greatest priority as Endumeni and we will make sure that, from time to time, we visit you. Those who still don't have luncheon clubs, please join them so that you will receive monthly empowerment session from other peers," added Councillor Makaba.



Some of the senior citizens who were in attendance.



Captain Mbense addressing senior citizens.





**Sello Mokwena said:**

"We are very disappointed by the scourge of violence against children and women. As men we say 'enough is enough'."



**Langutani Mhlaba said:**

"Death penalty should be brought back to punish these people who go around inflicting pain to those who can't fight for themselves."



**Moses Malatjie said:**

"Women need our love and care not the violence that men are putting them through. I hope that one day, as men, we will wake up and realise that violence does not solve any problem."

## PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

### Men speak against violence

*By Eunice Nkuna: GCIS, Limpopo*

On 2 October 2019, the Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality and Men's Forum embarked on a dialogue followed by a march to the Tzaneen Magistrate's offices, where they handed over their memorandum to the Acting Court Manager. They discussed issues pertaining to causes of violence and reasons why men resort to violence in order to solve family issues.

Demands contained in the memorandum included a call for the justice system to make sure that perpetrators are not given bail and that heavy sentences are imposed on those found guilty. The men also declared that, "We the men of Greater Tzaneen Municipality led by male councillors and Men's Forum declare to the world to know that, Not in our Name. We want the world to know that as men in Tzaneen, we are against gender-based violence (GBV) happening in and across our country at large."

The march was led by the Mayor of Greater Tzaneen Municipality Councillor Maripe Mangena.



Greater Tzaneen men march against GBV.



Handing over of the memorandum at the Magistrate's Court in Tzaneen.



**Thabita Mguzula and Bulelwa Mguzula said:**  
“Enough is enough! We can’t continue to live in fear in our homes like this.”



**Amelia Mofokeng said:**  
“I am just glad that I could contribute to the fight against violence on women and children, it must stop.”

## PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

### March against gender-based violence

*By Ntombi Mhlambi: GCIS, Free State*

On 18 October 2019, the community of Lejweleputswa in the Free State marched to the Welkom Magistrate’s Court against gender-based violence (GBV). The march was organised by the office of the Lejweleputswa District Municipality Executive Mayor Sebenzile Ngangelizwe and the Speaker Councillor Phindiwe Maleka.

The march follows a rise in cases of GBV in Welkom. Marchers could be heard shouting “enough is enough”.

They handed over a memorandum to Advocate Edwin Munyai from the National Prosecuting Authority and Thabiso Motsoeneng from the Free State Legislature. After receiving the memorandum, Advocate Munyai said they will continue to defend the rights of victims. He explained that their role is to submit evidence while the sentencing of perpetrators is done by judges.



Residents marching against GBV.