



MY DISTRICT TODAY



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OUTCOME 14: A DIVERSE, SOCIALLY COHESIVE SOCIETY WITH A COMMON NATIONAL IDENTITY.

Heritage Day unites communities

By Itumeleng Bogatsu: GCIS, Gauteng



Members of the public performing cultural dance moves at the event.

Heritage Day was celebrated in style at the Bright Start College in Glen Austin, Midrand. Different government departments and non-governmental organisations, learners and parents gathered at the college's open grounds to celebrate the day. Representatives of different embassies such as Zambia and Malawi also attended the event and all speakers were allowed to speak in their mother tongues. The event took the format of a cultural fair that showcased South Africa's living heritage, including aspects of the citizens from other countries who live in South Africa.

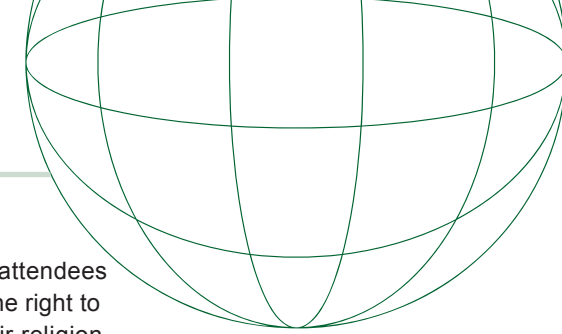
The event was celebrated under the theme: "Our indigenous knowledge, our heritage: Towards the identification, promotion and preservation of South Africa's living heritage".

Diverse communities in South Africa were encouraged to use aspects of their living heritage to promote and embrace cultural diversity, human rights, nation-building and economic development. Indigenous décor, clothing, foods, craft, dance, music, instruments and objects were displayed at the event.



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It was encouraging to see that community members were also committed to ensuring that all attendees were free to use their languages and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, including the right to belong to a cultural, religious or linguistic community and enjoy their culture and practise their religion. However, it is important to note that the abovementioned rights may not be exercised to infringe the rights of others or break the law.



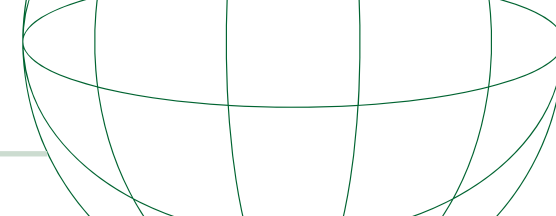
Children interacting with one another and enjoying themselves at the event.



Some of the community members who attended the event.



Dignitaries from different embassies enjoying different types of cultural performances at the event.



Maria Gwabeni said:

“We would like to see the bill also regulating the sale of medicines at street corners because the practice poses danger to the people.”



Dimpho Moseki said:

“I am a living example of a patient who has benefited through public participation; some people used to laugh at me because I stutter, but now I am more confident to speak and they do not laugh at me anymore.”



Anna-marie Van Wyk said:

“By consulting the public, government shows that even with different and diverse cultures, we are still one people with a common vision to move our country forward.”

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

Government reaches out to the people

By Xolani Mndaweni: GCIS, North West

“Taking services to the people” was the order of the day in Klerksdorp as members of the North West Legislature held a public-participation programme to consult communities about the Medicines and Related Substance Amendment Bill on 15 September 2015. “We have come to you to listen and take note of all inputs regarding the proposed bill; your inputs will form part of the discussions leading to the final bill,” said the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Nono Maloi.

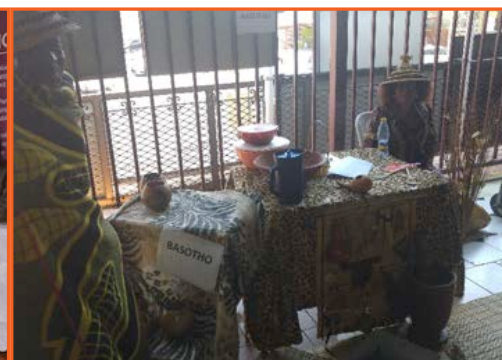
More than 300 community members from Ventersdorp, Klerksdorp, Wolmaranstad and Potchefstroom were able to interact with members of the North West Legislature without having to travel beyond their district. “We are very happy that our government has instilled a culture of putting people first at the centre of its actions and priorities,” said Sarah Moloko from Kanana.

There were different stalls outside the city hall that displayed cultural attires, garments and art works. “Officials are so well-mannered and well-dressed in their different cultural attires; I wish we could have this event every month,” said one community member from Alabama.

As the programme progressed, community members and interest groups received presentations and also gave feedback on matters relating to the draft bill. Members of the public were also encouraged to forward written submissions before the closing date. One of the local organisers from the Government Communication and Information System explained that the Thusong Service Centre Week, *izimbizo*, Setsokotsane approach and Public Service Month programmes should not be viewed as only happening in September, but rather as ongoing efforts to bring access to government services to the people in a dignified manner.



Members of the North West Legislature Nono Maloi and Ndleleni Duma seated with an official from the Department of Health.



Exhibitors displaying their Basotho cultural attire.



Community members during the public-participation programme at the event.



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



GCIS Eastern Cape Provincial Director Ndlentle Pinyana giving an overview of community-media footprint in the province and also directing the programme.



Acting Cabinet Spokesperson Phumla Williams being interviewed at Fort Hare FM.



Deputy Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams during radio interviews at Fort Hare FM.

Deputy Minister engages community media

By Tabita Ngqunge: GCIS, Eastern Cape



Deputy Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams addressing community media at the workshop.



Some of the attendees at the event.

Communications Deputy Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams led a developmental and integrated media workshop on 17 September 2015 in the Eastern Cape. The programme was responding to the community-media training needs that were identified by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) Eastern Cape office through a consultative process with the Eastern Cape Community Radio Forum, Eastern Cape Province Community Print Media and representative from the community television station. The workshop also sought to improve and enhance interaction between community-media institutions and government, particularly line-function entities responsible for community-media support.

The workshop was held under the theme: “TOGETHER: Towards a sustainable and self-reliant community media sector” and saw experts in the media space and community-media sector sharing skills and expertise to provide more insight and depth to those who are involved in the community-media operations.

The effort resonates well with Deputy Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams’s call in her 2015 Budget Vote speech when she said, “Community media remains an integral part of our democracy and transformation on the ground. Government remains resolute that community media must be supported, developed and capacitated to deliver on their mandate.”

This GCIS has pulled together relevant government entities and institutions such as the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, SENTECH, Media Development and Diversity Agency, Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority, and the South African Broadcasting Corporation towards working together in an integrated manner for capacity development and sustainable community-media platforms, which will benefit the people of South Africa at the end.

The programme was also attended by Acting Cabinet Spokesperson Phumla Williams, who shared information on government’s Operation Fiela, aligning it to the role of community media in communicating such initiatives. The whole programme was broadcasted live on Fort Hare community radio. The workshop ended with a pledge made by both government and the community-media sector to work together in moving South Africa forward.



OUTCOME 14: A DIVERSE, SOCIALLY COHESIVE SOCIETY WITH A COMMON NATIONAL IDENTITY.



Patrick Telemachus said:

“Heritage Day is a day that we come together as a community to celebrate our different practices.

Young people are given an opportunity to present their various talents and to interact with one another. The day is always full of fun and the love of God can be noticed among the people. My family and I are honoured to be part of this occasion since its inception five years ago.”

Oudtshoorn Heritage Day celebration

By Jethro Grootboom: GCIS, Western Cape

September is a very important period on our national calendar because it is Heritage Month. Coming out of the winter season, this is usually a much-awaited month of the spring rejuvenation not only of the fauna and flora, but to people as well. It is a time for all of us to find opportunities to be in touch with our natural landscape, exploring and enjoying its beauty, harmony and tranquillity. September is time for reflection and introspection about our heritage and life in general. The 21 years of freedom that we are celebrating this year bear profound resonance in the heritage and tourism sector. In the past 20 years we have been able to reclaim our dignity, culture, languages and beliefs.

The community of Oudtshoorn celebrated Heritage Day in style. Various local businesses, government departments, faith-based organisations, youth formations, Oudtshoorn Local Municipality, the Association of People Living with Disabilities and Government Communication and Information System supported the event.



Elijohn Funeral Services spokesperson said:

“We are very excited to be part of the Oudtshoorn Heritage Day celebration to share in the fun and acknowledging that we are one.”