A march against illegal abortions

By Mthunzi Mkhungo: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

The MEC for Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, led a march against illegal and unsafe abortion in Port Shepstone on 5 March 2019. MEC Dhlomo was joined by local leaders from government, civil society and religious groups. The march started at the District Department of Health offices through Mandela Drive up until to the main Port Shepstone taxi rank, where messages against illegal abortion and women abuse were uttered by both the MEC and local leaders.

“Government has programmes in place to make sure that people who do not want to fall pregnant are given proper medical treatment and those who are still young are encouraged to abstain in order to prevent unnecessary pregnancy,” MEC Dhlomo said.

He further encouraged men to support their partners during pregnancy so that they do not feel unnecessary pressure at times, which mostly results in illegal termination of pregnancy. The event saw a number of participants from different walks of life, who were saying that illegal abortion must, by all means possible, be a punishable offence.
Allele Futter said:

“Illegal abortion is inhuman and it must be dealt with by all possible ways. Government has gone an extra mile in passing laws that are biased towards residents, and I believe there is no country that accommodates its people like South Africa. In cases of unwanted pregnancy, people should consult their nearest health facilities within early days of pregnancy and seek free information.”

Wyne Cele said:

“Illegal abortion must be condemned. Government is spending more money for people to access health services without restrictions, so, I do not understand why we are not using such services. When unwanted or unplanned pregnancy occur, people need to seek professional advice from health institutions.”

Precious Dube said:

“People must use free government services, be it access to information, health services or any other services that are intended for the public. Within the Department of Health, people are educated every day about leading a healthy lifestyle and also about ways to protect them. Government has and is still taking care of its people. In cases of unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, people need to consult health practitioners for services that are free of charge and stop consulting illegal practitioners.”
OUTCOME 14: A DIVERSE, SOCIALLY COHESIVE SOCIETY WITH A COMMON NATIONAL IDENTITY.

Residents urged to uphold indigenous languages
By Masego Mollo: GCIS, Northern Cape

Northern Cape Premier Sylvia Lucas joined the Human Rights Day commemorative event at the Reitlamile Intermediate School in Pampierstand on 21 March 2019. She was accompanied by MECs Bongiwe Mbinqo-Gigaba, Martha Bartlett, Mxolisi Sokhatsa and other provincial dignitaries.

Her message to the residents of Pampierstad drew attention around the use of indigenous languages and the deepening of a human rights culture. The Premier said it was every citizen’s duty to strengthen and protect indigenous languages as this would promote the culture of human rights and mutual respect. She further called on all residents to foster social cohesion.

During this event, Premier Lucas handed over sporting equipment and trophies to local teams that won competitions, which were held as part of build-up programmes towards the Human Rights Day celebrations.
South Africa commemorates Human Rights Day
By Tinyiko Molefe: GCIS, Gauteng

The 2019 Human Rights Month was commemorated under the theme: “The Year of Indigenous Languages: Promoting and Deepening a Human Rights Culture”. All South African citizens were urged to use the month to reach out to one another as the country continues to build a united and prosperous nation. During the official commemoration of the Human Rights Day in Sharpeville on 21 March 2019, President Cyril Ramaphosa laid a wreath at the Sharpeville memorial site in honour of the 69 Struggle heroes who lost their lives during the 1960 Sharpeville massacre.

The Premier of Gauteng, David Makhura, said, “We will always remember the sacrifices and contributions of those who died so that we can get freedom, as we commemorate the passing of the people of Sharpeville, we also need to remember that it is here in Sharpeville where we signed our Constitution as a basic guide of human rights.”

In addressing the citizens as part of Human Rights Day message, President Ramaphosa said, “To be able to speak one’s mother tongue, to have one’s children taught in their mother tongue, is the most fundamental of human rights. Language is an integral part of the identity of a people. It is at the heart of who they are, of their culture, of how they define themselves, and the most important legacy they pass to their children.”
OUTCOME 14: A DIVERSE, SOCIALLY COHESIVE SOCIETY WITH A COMMON NATIONAL IDENTITY.

Human Rights Month dialogue
By Ntombi Mhlambi: GCIS, Free State

The NG Church in Block 7 at Kutlwanong hosted the Theology Faculty of the University of North West on a culture sharing dialogue, on 26 March 2019 as part of commemorating Human Rights Month. This year’s event is observed under the theme: “The Year of Indigenous Languages: Promoting and Deepening a Human Rights Culture”.

The purpose of the dialogue was to share information on the origin of Christianity. Professor Van Der Walt from the university presented on the history of the establishment of the translation of the Bible to different languages. He also said that it was very important for communities to always invite God.

The university handed 150 copies of the Bible written in different languages in celebration of the existence of the theology school. Stakeholders such as the traffic department made a presentation on anti-corruption, advising communities to stop bribery, especially in the upcoming Easter Holidays season whereby there will be an increase in the number of road users.

Makete said: “I really appreciate what the university is doing in spreading humanity in our communities.”

Shabangu said: “It is amazing what democracy has done providing us with the right to go anywhere we want.”

Khwadi said: “I am happy that our community got such an opportunity. I am going to enjoy reading my Bible.”

Professor Van Der Walt from the University of North West addressing the community of Kutlwanong.

The presentation of the Bible to Pastor Mokoena.