



MYDISTRICTTODAY



Issue no. 4: February 2025

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PRIORITY 1: CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

Pre-SoNA information-sharing session mobilises community

By Bongani Mazibuko; GCIS, Mpumalanga

On 5 February 2025, various government departments and local stakeholders held an information-sharing session at the Hlalani Primary School in Fernie A, in the Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality (CALM). The event aimed to create awareness for the State of the Nation Address (SoNA) taking place the next day and mobilise community members to catch it live on television or radio at 19:00.

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) partnered with stakeholders such as the South African Police Service (SAPS); Community Policing Forum; Department of Health; CALM; Pastors' Forum and Gert Sibande District Municipality's (GSDM) Environmental Health Services. The information-sharing session also sought to inform community members about the services provided by the stakeholders.

Mr Mduduzi Nkosi, the Manager of Fernie 1 Clinic, shared information on the community health services offered at the clinic. Mr Qedusisi Madi from the GSDM presented about food safety and advised community members to buy food from health-compliant food outlets/shops or restaurants that display their health-compliance certificates. He said: "I urge you to buy food from health-compliant outlets."

Sergeant Sipho Sithole from the Fernie SAPS informed community members about the benefits of working together with the police and reporting the abuse of children, women and men. He further encouraged community members to follow up on their opened cases until they are solved. He also shared the contact details of the police station, the station commander, his deputy and the head of detectives.

Meanwhile, some community members raised concern about a young man in their neighbourhood who allegedly terrorises them by breaking into their homes at night. They urged the police to arrest him.



Mr Nkosi presenting on health services available at the Fernie 1 Clinic. He also outlined initiatives to help improve the functionality of the clinic by reducing the waiting time to be served.



Sergeant Sithole highlighting the benefits of working with the police to fight crime. He reflected on recent arrests where community members had a role in informing the police.



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Mr Madi advised the community members to buy food items from health-compliant outlets.



Ms Lindo Nkosi from Ward 3 in the CALM said:

"I would be happy if the President and government can address the issue of youth unemployment. There are no employment opportunities in our rural areas, especially in the field of agriculture. Another issue is sport development. As young people, we love sport and we request funding support and sport development for young people."



Mr Elvis Dlamini, a Ward 3 committee member in the CALM, said:

"My concern is on crime. Police officers do make arrests but when the criminals get to court, they are released and come back to terrorise the community. I request the President and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development not to release criminals. Crime is also caused by unemployment. Some companies are shutting down and unemployment leads to increased levels of crime."

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

Community radio dialogue profiles government funding beneficiaries

By Sinxolo Gqala; GCIS, Eastern Cape

To raise public awareness of the 2025 State of the Nation Address, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in the Amathole District held a government funding beneficiaries radio dialogue at Ngqushwa FM on 29 January 2025.

The event aimed to highlight government’s support for economic development and small enterprises, as well as celebrate the country’s socio-economic gains in the past 30 Years of Freedom and Democracy.

Government provided financial support to a youth-owned cooperative from the rural village of Ncera Skweyiya in Dekeni under the Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality (RMLM). The Ulibo Agricultural Enterprise, a cooperative comprising five youth, produces a variety of vegetables and mielies, and also runs a recycling plant.

One of the members, Ms Amahle Bokveld, said in 2023 they caught the attention of government and its entities at the exhibition stalls during the Provincial Youth Day at Xesi in the RMLM. They received information to apply for government funding to support their cooperative.

During the Provincial Women’s Day event in 2024, the Office of the Eastern Cape Premier and Eastern Cape Development Corporation, provided the cooperative with a tractor and implements, demonstrating their successful application for funding and support.

“The receipt of the tractor and implements was a turning point and a huge boost for us; we are now able to cultivate more land and increase our production to meet our huge demand,” Ms Bokveld said.

Another member of the cooperative, Mr Thando Sixaxa, said: “We do apply and receive seeds, chemicals and fertiliser from the Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture.”

The cooperative employs 17 full-time youth, including young women from Ncera Skweyiya villages in Xesi. It also employs several seasonal workers during the planting and harvesting seasons.



The Director for Cooperatives and Enterprise Development at the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Mr Ayanda Ngqandu, joined the dialogue online.



Programme anchor Ms Bukelwa Godongwana with Ulibo Agricultural Enterprise representatives, Ms Bokveld and Mr Sixaxa, during the government funding beneficiaries radio dialogue at Ngqushwa FM.

PRIORITY 6: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

Pre-SoNA service delivery outreach promotes government services

By Peter Titus; GCIS, Western Cape

The service delivery outreach held in Stellenbosch on 5 February 2025, one day before President Cyril Ramaphosa delivered the State of the Nation Address at the Cape Town City Hall, sought to bring government services closer to the local community.

Stakeholders included the Department of Human Settlements; Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development; South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), Department of Employment and Labour; Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency; Film and Publication Board; South

African Police Service; Public Service Commission; Community Development Worker Programme; Cape Winelands District Municipality; Road Accident Fund (RAF) and Stellenbosch Municipality.

Owing to the huge demand for Home Affairs services, negotiations were underway to request the department to address the backlog in services in and around Stellenbosch. Ms Jesslyn Valentine, from Cloeteville in Stellenbosch, requested that President Ramaphosa address the high unemployment rate in their community.



Some of the people at the service delivery outreach receiving services from departments such as Home Affairs and SASSA.



The RAF official explaining their services.



SASSA officials providing their services during the outreach.

PRIORITY 3: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HEALTH.

UMshwathi Matric Excellence Awards recognise learners and teachers

By Mlungisi Dlamini; GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

The Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Ms Sindisiwe Chikunga, has applauded KwaZulu-Natal schools for obtaining 84 470 bachelor's passes, exceeding the second-best province, Gauteng, by over 17 000 bachelor's passes. She was delivering a keynote address at the uMshwathi Matric Excellence Awards ceremony held at the Torwoodlea Lodge in Wartburg on 28 January 2025. She said quintals one and two accounted for 67% of these results, with the majority of these schools being in rural areas. "This is a reflection of the commitment and hard work of educators, principals and all involved stakeholders in different parts of the province," she said.

The uMshwathi Local Municipality's annual awards recognise learners and teachers who have excelled in their work. The Mayor of uMshwathi, Cllr Mandla Zondi, praised the Matric Class of 2024 for the job well done and for flying the uMshwathi flag high.

The Mayor, however, expressed concern about some of the schools that have had low matric pass rates. He urged the circuit manager and other stakeholders to collaborate to increase the number of bachelor's passes. "This year we obtained 700 bachelor's passes as a circuit, and this is an indication of the strength we possess and that we can surpass this number by 300 this year if we pull together," said Cllr Zondi.

According to him, the municipality has set aside funds to establish a local boot camp for students to attend extra classes, supported by highly experienced educators from the district.

The results are a step towards achieving one of the National Development Plan's objectives that "by 2030 learner performance must be comparable to world-class standards."



Minister Chikunga delivering a keynote address at the uMshwathi Matric Excellence Awards ceremony.



Cllr Zondi delivering an opening address at the annual ceremony.



Teachers who have excelled in their subjects and leadership during the award-giving ceremony at uMshwathi.



Some of the people, including top students, who attended the event.



Stakeholders, teachers, parents and students at the uMshwathi award-giving ceremony.