

DID YOU KNOW?

The number of international tourists who visited South Africa in 2012 is 9.2 million, up from 8.3 million in 2011.



MY DISTRICT TODAY

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Outcome 7: Vibrant equitable and sustainable rural communities with food security for all

Community benefits from land restitution programme

Odas Ngobeni: GCIS Limpopo



Members of Maitjene Community Development Trust witnessing the arrival of the 50 Nguni heifers.

The commemoration of the 1913 Native Land Act comes at the right time for a Limpopo community that successfully claimed 23 farms along the Selati River at Ofcalaco six years ago.

Members of the Maitjene community, who were forcefully removed from their land at end of World War I, won back farms covering an area of 7902 hectares valued at R83 million.

Many of the 168 evicted families settled in the nearby village of Sekororo, while others moved as far back as Muhlaba. The then Department of Land Affairs established Maitjene Community Development Trust in 2008, in line with the provisions of the Land Restitution Act 22 of 1994, as amended.

The trust, which now has about 1700 verified beneficiaries, is determined to make a success of this programme. Clive Mashele, chairperson of the trust says "We have seen many

land claimants moving into productive farms, and then failing to run them because of internal fights and lack of skills. We didn't want to make the same mistake.

"For the past six years, we have been receiving training and mentorship from the previous land owners. We are now ready to venture into cattle farming," she said.

The trust is renting the 18 farms to the previous owners at 2% of the original buying price. "As part of the lease agreements with the previous owners, they are expected to employ our people and to empower them with farming skills. One day, we will be able to run all the farms on our own," says Mashele.

The trust allocated four farms to 17 community members who are beneficiaries of the mentorship programme. Many of them are farming with cash crops and poultry, while one farm was set aside for the Nguni cattle breeding project. This programme started when the provincial Department of Agriculture delivered a loan of 50 Nguni cows in February this year

"Two cows have already given birth and we are awaiting two bulls from the Department of Agriculture. We aim to have 170 to 200 heads on the farm in the next few years. This herd will introduce new genetic material into the greater communal herd and also create job opportunities. We also plan to start an abattoir," adds Mashele.

According to the project manager, Cedric Mojapelo, the unique project run in partnership with the University of Limpopo and the provincial Department of Agriculture,

is aimed at reintroducing the Nguni cattle breed into selected rural communities, with the long-term objective of developing an international niche market for organically produced Nguni beef.

"The emerging farmers and communities participating in the project are required to return heifers from the offspring within five years," explains Mojapelo.

One of the beneficiaries who are putting the land to good use is Patrick Malungana, a school principal from Nkowankowa Township and also the external deputy chairperson of the trust. Malungana owns a herd of 35 cattle and plants crops on a five-hectare piece of land. "I have been exporting green peppers, tomatoes and garlic to Botswana during the past years, and I plan to channel all my energy to commercial farming when I retire as a teacher in the next couple of years," he says.

"We plan to appoint an operating company for the day-to-day running of the trust as a separate entity, so that no matter what happens in the board, the entity will continue to operate. We are setting up structures. Once we get going we will just run, instead of crawling."

The provincial Department of Agriculture has been conducting grazing analysis for some of the farms, and also organised training for the board in corporate governance.

Cross Shikwambana (70), one of the elders from the community, said he was very happy to see the land of his ancestors being used for the benefit of all.

"I sleep peacefully at night. Working together with the previous owners, we have a good chance to produce one of the success stories in government's land restitution programme," he said.



Outcome 2: A long and healthy life for all South Africans

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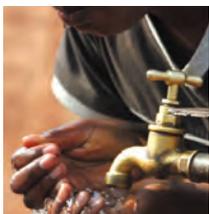
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School soccer extravaganza to celebrate World Health Day

Ntombi Mhlambi: GCIS Free State

According to the Alma-Ater Declaration adopted by the World Health Organisation (WHO), health is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”.

Sports and physical activity have been proven to play a significant role in the overall health and well-being of humans. It has direct positive benefits on the body including prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease, osteoporosis and high blood pressure (hypertension). Physical activity obtained through sports has both physical and mental benefits.

In view of this assertion, the Department of Health in Thabo Mofutsanyana District in the Free State, in collaboration with the Government Communication and Information System, the Department of Education, and the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, organised

a soccer match and a health awareness campaign to observe World Health Day. The day is celebrated annually on 7 April to mark the anniversary of the founding of the WHO which was established 65 years ago.

Each year, a theme that highlights a global priority area or a public health concern is selected. The theme for this year was high blood pressure. High blood pressure has been dubbed the silent killer; it affects more than one in three adults worldwide and accounts for more than nine million deaths including about half of all deaths due to heart disease and strokes.

The integrated outreach activation by the Department of Health is aimed at instilling and promoting a culture of healthy living through sports. The mood at the soccer match was electric, the excitement almost palpable and the ever-rising noise levels generated by more 1 000

Vuvuzela-blowing learners reverberated throughout the packed Bohlokong Stadium.

Thabo Thokoza Secondary School and Ntsu High School, known to be bitter rivals in local schools sports circles, put their sporting differences aside to play for a good cause. The youngsters produced an entertaining display in an encounter that was arranged to promote the benefits of healthy living. Thabo Thokoza claimed bragging rights following their convincing 4-2 victory.

The event proved to be successful in that many learners received expert advice during the health talks. The school health programme and primary health care professionals also conducted blood pressure screenings and HIV counselling and testing sessions.



Learners from Thabo Thokoza Secondary School waiting to be screened by a health professional.



The action on the pitch had spectators on the edge of their seats.



Learners from the two schools packed the stadium to almost full capacity.



Outcome 12: An efficient, effective and development-oriented Public Service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship

Community dialogue to tackle gender-based violence

Jabulani Mkhonza: GCIS KwaZulu-Natal



As part of the ongoing campaigns across the country to try and curb the scourge of gender-based violence, the Government Communication and Information System and the Bhekuzulu Self-Sufficient Project (BSSP) organised a community dialogue held in Bhekuzulu, UThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal.

with abuse. It became evident that rape, physical, mental and social abuse were the most common forms of violence experienced by the community. Lt Col RZ Mabaso from the Estcourt SAPS was highly impressed with the community of Bhekuzulu, saying that they were one of the very few rural communities who were well informed when it came to law and order. She also encouraged them to report rape cases immediately.

that his department offered psychological counselling to victims of abuse. If the victim was raped, he or she would be taken to a doctor for a DNA test. These results can be used as evidence when prosecuting the perpetrator. Ngidi then called upon all the adults to behave themselves when in the presence of children, as they learn their behaviour from observing adults.



Lt Col RZ Mabaso from Estcourt SAPS, flanked by representatives from the departments of social development and justice, addressing the audience.

Stakeholders at the event included the departments of social development and justice, and members of the Estcourt branch of the South African Police Service (SAPS). Fezile Hadebe from BSSP highlighted the importance of the day's purpose, namely finding common ground in the fight against the abuse of women, in particular among the elderly and children. She stressed the importance of people reporting cases of abuse even if it does not directly affect them, and also advised the audience not to look at abuse as something that happens to other people, something you only hear about in the news.

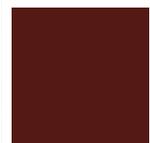
Lt Col Mabaso said that the New Sexual Offence Act also made provision for male rape victims; and that domestic violence could involve any member of the family, such as parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, nephews etc. She explained that there was a new way of opening a case in the police station. "You no longer go to the charge office. There is an office allocated where the victim sits one-on-one with a police officer, thus giving the client some privacy."

Mr Mkhize, who represented the Department of Justice, clarified the court processes in terms of case management. He urged the community to report incidences of domestic violence at the local police station. Victims may also approach the court, traditional leaders, prosecutors, religious leaders, social workers and non-governmental organisations working in their areas.

The community was then educated on the different kinds of abuse people may suffer, and how former victims dealt

In response to the question posed by a participant, Mr Ngidi from the Department of Social Development mentioned

The campaign actively supports the priorities of government to empower women, in particular rural women, grappling with the challenge of unemployment and poverty; and protects the rights of children.



Outcome 10: Environmental assets and natural resources that are well protected and continually enhanced



Deputy Minister and Mayor of Kareeberg Municipality, Cllr N Titus

The community of Carnarvon declares “war on leaks” to conserve water

Thenjiwe Konono: GCIS Northern Cape



Deputy Minister Rejoice Mabudafhasi fixing a water leak at a house in Carnarvon, Kareeberg Local Municipality in the Northern Cape.

South Africa is ranked among the 30 driest countries in the world. With these words central to her message, the Deputy Minister of Water Affairs, Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi, launched the War on Leaks Programme in the Carnarvon, Kareeberg Local Municipality. According to Deputy Minister Mabudafhasi, the programme came at a time when municipalities were incurring loss of revenue through unaccounted water, exacerbated by leaking pipes and taps. She stressed that if this problem was not addressed, it could lead to disaster.

The War on Leaks Project was developed to eradicate leaks at household level, educate users about water conservation and fixing leaks, create jobs for young people, and promote skills development.

The declaration of a “War on Leaks” could also be seen as a response to President Jacob Zuma’s plea to reduce water loss by half by 2014, as iterated in his 2010 State of the Nation Address.

Deputy Minister Mabudafhasi said South Africa was already faced with scarce water resources, and

further threatened by high levels of pollution in dams and rivers. The country also faced vast water wastage in homes, schools and businesses as a result of leaking taps and pipes.

“Through our creation of public awareness and education, we are implementing the 2020 Vision programme, which is a school-based community-outreach programme. The programme continues to educate grades R to 12 learners about integrated water-resource management, climate change and the environment; including water-related careers.”

Members of the public were urged to report the misuse of water and other faults to their nearest municipal offices, or call the department’s toll free number on 0800 200 200.

Deputy Minister Mabudafhasi, accompanied by the mayor of the Kareeberg Local Municipality, Nico Titus, and John Lolwana, the executive mayor of the Pixley ka Seme Local Municipality, took time to show the community how to repair a leaking tap.

