



MY DISTRICT TODAY

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232 229 houses have been up-graded in informal settlements.

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OUTCOME 8: SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND AN IMPROVED QUALITY OF HOUSEHOLD LIFE

Putting an end to mud houses

By Mlungisi Dlamini and Zakhele Mtolo: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal



The Minister of Human Settlements in KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Ravigasen Ranganathan Pillay congratulates Mr Mdiba on his new house.



One of the newly built Rural Housing Development Project houses in Kilmun community in ward 1 of Ingwe.

As part of the Rural Housing Development Project, the Minister of Human Settlements in KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Ravigasen Ranganathan Pillay, accompanied by prominent political leaders and traditional leaders from Ingwe and Harry Gwala District Municipality, visited the Kilmun community in ward 1 of Ingwe on 29 October, where he handed over newly built RDP houses to the local community.

This government initiative, which is being managed by Umpheme Constructions, has completed 300 houses to date in an effort to eradicate mud houses and ensure that rural communities

enjoy the fruits of freedom. It guarantees quality living conditions that enhance human dignity and responds to government's Outcome 8 (sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life).

One of the beneficiaries, Mr Mdiba, who is on crutches after he sustained an injury, which almost had him permanently disabled said, "We can't stop thanking the Government for what it has done for our family, elevating us from zero to hero." He said this after the Minister officially handed over the house to him and his family.

Addressing hundreds of community members at the official handover, the Minister emphasised that the Rural Development Project is set to spread to most wards in the near future, as the Magqubeni Housing Project in ward 4 is also underway. "This is just a beginning; we have planned projects in areas surrounding Ingwe in places such as Ntekaneni and Deepdale. Some projects are still in planning stages, which can take time, but they are guaranteed to happen," the Minister concluded.

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Households with no toilets declined significantly from the 13,3% in 2001 to the 5,2% in 2011.

OUTCOME 8: SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND AN IMPROVED QUALITY OF HOUSEHOLD LIFE

Executive mayor fights health hazard – life has indeed changed

By Mokgoma Nkopodi: GCIS, Limpopo



Some of the community members reading Vuk'uzenzele while waiting for the executive mayor during the handover of the VIP toilets.



The executive mayor (in the black suit) handed over the VIP toilet. Ms Shokane couldn't wait to enter while the Mayor of Makhuduthamaga (left) looked on.

The Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality officially handed over ventilated improved pit (VIP) sanitary toilets to the tiny village of Thoto in ward 3 of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. Thoto is one of the many poor rural communities of Sekhukhune district.

It was a bright and sunny Wednesday morning on 16 October 2013, when Sekhukhune District Municipality, led by Executive Mayor Councillor Mogobo Magabe, official handed over the VIPs to Thoto village. He was accompanied by the Mayor of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Councillor Alfred Matlala, the local Induna of Thoto village, Mr Lucas Monakedi, as well as members of the Mayoral Committee and the ward councillors.

In his welcome address, Induna Monakedi thanked both the local and district municipalities for listening to their requests. "We are very thankful for the donation made by Makhuduthamaga and Sekhukhune district municipalities. We ask you to please do more than what you have done today. The majority of households do not have proper toilets."

The main aim of the event was to symbolically hand over 3 521 VIP toilets. Besides Thoto, other villages also benefited from the project, namely Phokoane, Ga-Malaka and Ga-Manthanyane. In his keynote address, the Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality indicated that the Government was serious about service delivery to citizens of the country in general. "We are aware that there are many basic needs that communities demand from their government and we know that these cannot be achieved within a short space of time. However, let us appreciate what our government can afford to do for us," Mayor Magabe explained.

One house was identified as the site for the mayor to do the symbolic handover. Ms Emma Shokane's VIP toilet was handed over during the ceremony. As per protocol, the ward councillor, Mr Mapitising, accompanied by Ntona Monakedi, were given the opportunity to cut the ribbon first, followed by the Mayor of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, and lastly the Executive Mayor, Mr Magabe. This time he was assisted by all those who were involved earlier. The excited recipient, Ms Emma Shokane, was also present.

"I am extremely excited about what my leaders have done for me. I want to extend a special thanks to my ward councillor, Mr Mapitising, who first brought the news to me when he visited my place accompanied by some people who identified themselves as members of the Steering Committee," Ms Shokane explained. "I did not take them seriously then, as I thought they were making fun of me because I am poor and I don't have a toilet. But today I am excited to tell you how that visit brought so much relief and dignity to my house, and my two sons Kgothatso and Timothy," concluded the excited Ms Shokane. Community members who witnessed the ceremony also broke out in song and dance.

In his concluding statement, Mr Magabe indicated that he had met with the MEC of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs and the Premier about the other service delivery challenges that are faced in the area, including other areas in the district, which will be attended to soon. "We will make sure that Ms Shokane receives an RDP house within a reasonable space of time because when they were allocated she was not living here," he concluded.



The percentage of households in 2009 with access to water infrastructure above or equal to the Reconstruction and Development Programme standard increased from 61,7% in 1994 to 91,8% in March 2009.



Some of the members who participated in the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature's visit.



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

Taking the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature to the people

By Jabulani Mkhonza: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

In line with its vision of being people-centred and active, the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature hosted a two-day community outreach programme in the Umzinyathi district. The events were held at Ngisana, which forms part of the Endumeni Municipality, on 30 and 31 October. The aim was to respond to people's concerns and issues raised during the legislature's first community engagement.

In his welcoming remarks, Umzinyathi District Municipality Mayor, Councillor W Mthethwa, thanked the members of the legislature for their commitment to serving the people of Umzinyathi. The mayor mentioned that there are water schemes, but people still have illegal connections. He said the district has provided water and sanitation to people and that there is significant progress in household electrification.

KwaZulu-Natal Legislature's Deputy Speaker, Mtholephi Mthimkhulu, told the audience that this was the legislature's second visit in a month to give feedback to the people on issues they raised in the previous meetings and to report on progress made thus far. "This morning we visited various wards to see the developments. We then handed over RDP houses to beneficiaries," added Mthimkhulu. He encouraged people to work together with government to make their lives better.

A report was submitted by a member of the legislature, Mrs Blose, which acknowledged that government services reach the people but not yet all areas. In her report



KwaZulu-Natal Premier Senzo Mchunu addressing the public.

it is stated that water provisioning still remains a major challenge in the district. Careful attention has to be paid to water distribution. Many farm communities are still subjected to harassment by farmers. There is also an urgent need for government to speed up the land redistribution programme.

The report goes on to mention that in some areas community care givers are not happy with the stipends they receive. Electricity provisioning is still a challenge, especially in Msinga. Electrification of households has already started in some parts of the area, but many people are unaware of this. Most people are unhappy with the RDP houses provided. They also complain about the company contracted to construct the houses, saying it is building shoddy houses. However, the report does highlight progress on road infrastructure.

The MEC for Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, who is also an Umzinyathi district champion, Dr BM Radebe, together with members of the legislature, visited ward 14 and said it was the best functioning ward in the district. They also visited a viable chicken project and were impressed by the process. About 31 households were identified to benefit from four boreholes. Mr Radebe talked about cattle branding to prevent stock theft. He lambasted officials and urged them to clean up their acts and work for all people without favour.

In conclusion, KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Senzo Mchunu, highlighted the country's growing economy. However, he said, it is not growing the way they had hoped and expected. The premier envisaged more job opportunities. "If the economy keeps growing, government will be able to build more infrastructure, like the Bridge City Station," Mr Mchunu said. According to Mr Mchunu, R244 million has been allocated for the beautification of Nquthu, Dundee and Msinga.

He said the National Health Insurance pilot project was progressing well in Umzinyathi. A major road infrastructure project has been approved, whereby a road connecting Nquthu and Kranskop will soon be constructed. The Department of Human Settlements will continue building RDP houses in rural areas. The departments of transport, health, social development and cooperative governance and traditional affairs also reported back on issues raised by the community during the first engagement.



948 468 food gardens have been established to enable poor households to produce their own food.



OUTCOME 7: VIBRANT, EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES AND FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL

Mabatlane Thusong cares

By MM Ramoshaba: GCIS, Limpopo

Stakeholders commemorated Social Development Month at the Mabatlane Thusong Centre by conducting door-to-door visits with the IEC, Eskom, ward committee members and educators from early childhood centres to inform community members of services rendered by the Thusong Service Centre and to check whether they have registered to vote in the upcoming elections. Families who were identified during profiling for sustainable livelihoods were visited. They were provided with seeds by the Department of Social Development. They also received tools such as forks, spades and wheelbarrows from the department to continue to maintain their vegetable gardens.



Elsie Rathokolo received spinach and carrot seeds from the Department of Social Development. "I really appreciate the assistance from the department. I am able to sell spinach and carrots to my neighbours and get money to buy electricity and food to support my family. Today I got two forks and a wheelbarrow with which to work in my garden. I thank the government for the efforts they make to ensure that we have food."



Phillemon Mkwanzazi from Ext 1 in Vaalwater says he appreciates the donation of two forks by the department. He will use them in the garden. The department also donated spinach, carrots, tomatoes, and tools such as a wheelbarrow, rake and spade. "I appreciate that they still come back to us and provide aftercare," he said.



Johannes Mokhotswane from Vaalwater Ext 2 showed Jan Sefora that his yard is too small for the garden. "I have planted spinach, tomatoes, onions and cabbage and the yard is too small. I wished to plant more vegetables as the demand is high. A lack of water in Mabatlane is also a problem, and rain is scarce. I appreciate that Social Development gave me seeds and tools to start a vegetable garden. Government is doing a lot for us. I have an RDP house, a grant, and I am also able to visit social workers at the Mabatlane Thusong Centre to assist me with my naughty children. As I have just moved to Vaalwater from Lephhalale I will also register to vote here, as advised by the IEC," said Mokhotswane.



Aaron Nkuna also received onions, tomatoes, spinach and carrots from the Department of Social Development. "I no longer buy vegetables, and I am able to sell some to sustain the garden. I appreciate efforts taken by government to care for poverty-stricken families." He also received information from Tebogo Tshabalala of the IEC on the importance of voting and when and where to register.



25 615 firearms recovered by the SAPS in 2011/12.



Rapuleng Moshwang from GCIS in North West fighting a fire.



Godfrey Blom from GCIS learnt the skills of fire fighting.



Dikeledi Moiloa busy fighting a fire.

OUTCOME 3: ALL PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE AND FEEL SAFE

GCIS employees in North West trained in fire fighting

By Ephraim Malema: GCIS, North West



GCIS officials during the fire-fighting training.

GCIS officials in North West took part in intensive fire-fighting training at Mafikeng Local Municipality's Fire Department on 4 November 2013.

With proper training and education in fire fighting, the ability to make the right decisions in extraordinary situations is increased, and GCIS officials learnt how to face a fire in case it arises at their workplace.

Approximately 600 people die and over 4 000 are injured annually in South Africa as a result of fire, and these blazes cause more than R500 million in damage to property every year.

In order to ensure that there are more on-site fire safety experts available to reduce these statistics, the GCIS in North West made sure that its employees are equipped with fire-fighting skills.

Legislation requires that one in 50 people per company, or two per building, should be trained in basic fire fighting. The GCIS in North West is adhering to this legislation.

Basic fire-fighting skills minimise loss of life and property by extinguishing fires in their early stages. The best method of stopping a fire is to prevent it. The actions taken to control a fire during the first few minutes will determine whether it can be contained or not.