




MY DISTRICT TODAY



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OUTCOME 10: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS AND NATURAL RESOURCES THAT ARE WELL PROTECTED AND CONTINUALLY ENHANCED

Government acts to address water challenges

By Bonginkosi Gumede: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Nomvula Mokonyane, and KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Nomusa Dube-Ncube led a mall and taxi activations on 15 July 2015 in iLembe and eThekweni areas. The two government leaders engaged with community members and briefed them about drought-relief programmes to be introduced by the provincial government. They spread the message about water conservation in areas that had been severely affected by low water levels. Hazelmere Dam is currently at 30% level and this affects water supply in many parts of the province. "We need to do everything that we can to save the little that we have. We are raising awareness about the shortage of water as this is not a man-made problem but is due to the lack of rainfall," said Minister Mokonyane.

MEC Dube-Ncube also said: "We are encouraged that our people have taken the call to conserve what we have seriously and to use the available water resources sparingly. Water is a scarce resource, with no substitute, and we must change our water-use patterns if we are to preserve this resource and ensure that supply meets demand. We have witnessed a significant decline in the pace of water outflows from our dams since the water rationing commenced."

The day concluded with different religious groups coming together to pray for divine intervention at Hazelmere Dam. Minister Mokonyane and MEC Dube-Ncube also attended the prayer session.



Minister Nomvula Mokonyane being interviewed by the media.

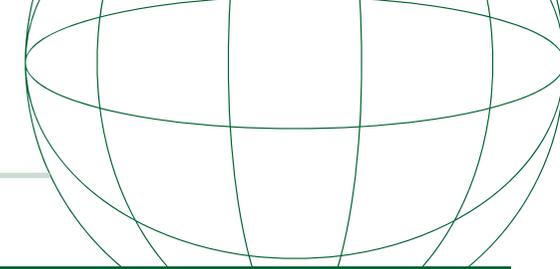


Minister Mokonyane engaging with a community member on issues of drought.



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

Farmer empowers communities

By Nkopodi Mokgoma: GCIS, Limpopo



Maria Swele at her farm.



Workers harvesting cotton at the farm.

Maria Swele is the owner and founder of Maria Swele Project. The 34-year-old woman hails from Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality. She owns a 32-hectare farm that produces cotton, maize and peanuts. She sells her products to local customers and those beyond her village.

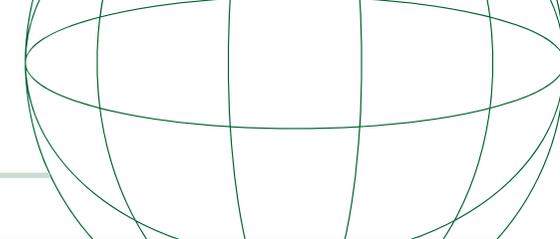
Swele started her farming career in 2004 after being encouraged by her former employer. She started on a four-hectare farm ploughing maize.

“Due to my commitment in cotton farming, I received a helping hand from government through skills development, provision of manure, seeds and assistance in soil sampling,” she said. Swele has 112 employees comprising 105 women and seven men. Twenty-two of them are permanently employed while the others are seasonal workers.

She also does social responsibility work in Maklerekeng village. “I provide soup and also polish shoes for 68 destitute children at Maklerekeng drop-in-centre, where I am also a board member,” she said with a smile. “Learners from neighbouring schools also come to have practical lessons about what we do on a daily basis,” she added.

Through her hard work, Swele was able to save money and bought herself farming implements such as a tractor, disc harrow and a planter. This saves her time and money that she would spend hiring these implements.

The businesswoman is determined to expand her farm to 200 hectares so that she can create more jobs and eradicate poverty.



Lehotswe Sebaka said:
 "I am very happy to see change in our community. Thank you government."



Elsie Knight said:
 "This hall will remind us of Madiba. It is a good day and I am happy to be here."



The Mayor standing in front of the community hall.

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

Mandela Day changes lives

By Karen Foutie: GCIS, Northern Cape



Vergenoeg community members at the Mandela Day event.



The Mandela Day cake.



Food parcels that were presented to needy community members.



The community hall that was handed over on Mandela Day.

On 18 July 2015, the Vergenoeg community members were in high spirits as Mandela Day was celebrated with the handing over of a community hall.

The Mayor of Ga-Segonyana Local Municipality, Gibson Anthony, said the theme for Mandela Day is to inspire change and promote democratic values. "We must use Madiba's life and his work to make a difference and give to those who do not have through charitable deeds," said the Mayor.

Mayor Anthony further stated that the reason for celebrating Madiba's birthday was not only to hand over the completed community hall, but to give food parcels to identified and needy people in the community.

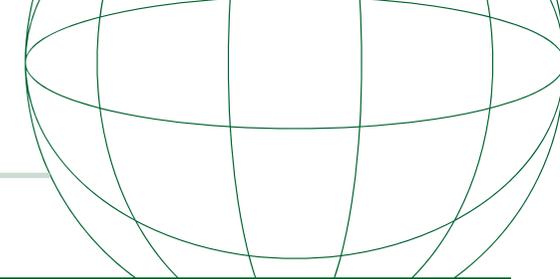
"This community hall will benefit the whole community for a long time and will always be in remembrance of Mandela Day," said Elsie Knight as she expressed her joy to be one of the recipients of food parcels.

The special programmes coordinator, Irene Schoeman, confirmed that 60 food parcels were presented to identified people by the Department of Social Development. She also said that the food parcels were donated to older persons and those with disabilities. The municipality donated other 200 food parcels to identified people in other wards.

The event was attended by over 200 community members.



Leabo Mathiti said:
 "I really like the hall. We know more about Madiba and his life. He did a lot for us and we have peace and freedom because of his hard work."



DJ Blaze said:

“We are grateful to the Deputy Minister for giving us a laptop as it will assist us in our operations. I would like to thank government for the great job it is doing in our communities.”



Xolani Mdaweni congratulating Mccaswell Khumalo from *The Hills* newspaper.

Mccaswell said:

“I am very happy, humbled and honoured to have received this gift from the Deputy Minister of Communications. It means a lot to me and to the newspaper as it will always motivate us to work harder. It will also be an inspiration to the whole team at *The Hills* newspaper. We were sharing a laptop as management and now we will be able to work and serve the community. We would like to thank the Government Communication and Information System for always linking communities with opportunities.”

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

Deputy Minister reaches out to youth

By Abigail Sejesho: GCIS, North West



Deputy Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams addressing young people at the event.



Young people attended the event and engaged with the Deputy Minister.



Young people accessing information at the stalls.

Communications Deputy Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams visited Taung in North West on 16 July 2015 to address young people through a dialogue. The purpose of the dialogue was to highlight government programmes for youth development and how youth can access them. Various stakeholders such as the North West Development Corporation, Small Enterprise Development Agency, National Youth Development Agency, Brand SA, Love Life and the Office of the Premier participated in the dialogue.

“We have to identify our own course, like the generation that came before us; in order to become economic freedom fighters,” said the Deputy Minister.

Over 400 young people who attended the event were empowered with information and tips on how they can access available entrepreneurial and employment opportunities. Deputy Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams presented three laptops to Vaaaltar FM, Diamond FM and *The Hills* newspaper. She also donated 500 memory sticks to the young people who attended the event.