




MY DISTRICT TODAY



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CONTACT DETAILS OF THE GCIS PROVINCIAL OFFICES

For more information about similar programmes that are run across the country, contact one of the following provincial offices:

EASTERN CAPE

Ndlelantle Pinyana
043 722 2602 or 076 142 8606
ndlelantle@gcis.gov.za

FREE STATE

Trevor Mokeyane
051 448 4504 or 083 255 0042
tshenolo@gcis.gov.za

GAUTENG

Peter Gumede
011 834 3560 or 083 570 8080
peterg@gcis.gov.za

KWAZULU-NATAL

Ndala Mngadi
031 301 6787 or 082 877 9420
ndala@gcis.gov.za

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

Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) launch of Women's Month in Nyanga, Phillipi.

By: Ntandokazi Kukuma

On 9 August the Western Cape JCPS cluster organised a service-delivery Imbizo for Women's Month. It took place at the Intsebenziswano Primary School in Nyanga cluster in Phillipi so that women from the community could access services. The Nyanga cluster had been identified as one of the areas with a high rate of sexual violence, rape, domestic violence and many other crime-related activities. The aim of the Imbizo was to address the community's concerns regarding the criminal justice system with a specific focus on maintenance, domestic violence and sexual offences and to assess access to justice and front-line services.

This year the theme of Women's Month is "Celebrating 60th Anniversary of Women's Charter and 20 Years of Freedom: Together moving a non-racial, non-sexist South Africa forward." The South African Police Service's Provincial Commissioner: Western Cape, Lt Gen Arno Lamoer delivered the keynote address at the event. He reminded the audience that the President in his State of the Nation address had urged citizens to clean their environments on Mandela Day: "We should start with cleaning our attitudes towards human beings. It should take a village to raise a child. The spirit of Ubuntu must be revived," said Lamoer.

Activities at the event included wonderful performances by the "Kleinvele Dance Group" whose members are inspiring young women from the Mfuleni rehabilitation centre. Their mentor, Constable F Van Wyk, delivered messages of support. She encouraged the audience to be the change they want to see in their communities. She said she had met the young women in the group on the streets. Some were prostitutes, drug addicts, club strippers and shoplifters. "We need to take authority as women, uplift, elevate and make these lost young women understand their mandate and vision by protecting our integrity and that of our nation. Fallen women can rise again," she said.

Community members expressed their fears and dissatisfaction at the delivery of crime- and security-related services. They acknowledged that progress had been made towards achieving gender equity since the adoption of the Women's Charter, but said they believed that more could still be done. The departments participating in the JCPS promised to ensure that the women's agenda would be given more prominence in the province. The departments included those of justice and constitutional development, the police, home affairs, correctional services and communications as well as Legal Aid South Africa and the National Prosecuting Authority.



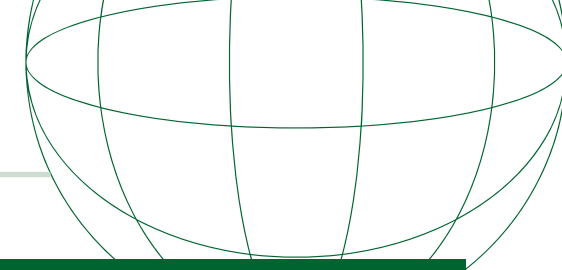
Ms Eileen Davids said, "I am proud today because it's our day and we should take responsibility. We should know our roles as women and we should stop blaming government when things don't go well. I learned a lot about my responsibilities as a woman and a police volunteer. I have worked as a volunteer at a Ceres police station for nine years and I know safety is important therefore the information of where, how and when to report crime, the directions and advice are very important for our people."



government
communications

Department:
Government Communication and Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





LIMPOPO

Thanyani Ravhura
015 291 4689 or 082 421 3461
thanyani@gcis.gov.za

MPUMALANGA

Tiisetso Ramotse
013 753 2397 or 072 219 5136
tiisetso@gcis.gov.za

NORTH WEST

Mareka Mofokeng
018 381 7071 or 083 382 5909
mareka@gcis.gov.za

Kagisho Meremetsi
018 381 7071 or 084 318 9179
kagisho@gcis.gov.za

NORTHERN CAPE

Marius Nagel
053 832 1378/9 or 083 778 9179
mariusn@gcis.gov.za

WESTERN CAPE

Ayanda Hollow
021 697 0145 or 083 255 7665
ayanda@gcis.gov.za



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

Anti-crime campaign in Alexandra

By: Tshidi Mokoka

In response to the high level of crime in Alexandra, the Office of the National Prosecuting Agency (NPA) in partnership with the Alexandra Police Station and other crime-fighting organisations held an anti-crime campaign in the Sankopano Community Hall, Alexandra on Thursday, 24 July.

As a crime-fighting agency, the NPA wanted to communicate that the fight against crime can be won if the people work with crime-fighting organisations to make sure that communities are kept safe. NPA spokesperson Phindi Louw told community members that crime affects everyone in South Africa. The NPA fights crime by working with members of the community to make sure that criminals are not hidden but are turned over to the police to make sure that the might of the law takes its course.

“Our role as the NPA today is to educate and empower communities about their role in the fight against crime. The NPA’s mandate is to provide safety and we have realised that without the buy-in of people in communities, that cannot be achieved,” she said.

Lieutenant Thobejane of the Alexandra Police Station spoke about the importance of gathering evidence and how vital it is that crime scenes are not contaminated. He said that people were cautioned not to take the law into their own hands until all evidence had been collected and tested. “At a crime scene exhibits will be collected and sent to laboratories for forensic testing. But in some cases suspects are released because evidence at crime scenes is either stolen or moved,” he said.

The campaign emphasised that when a person reports a crime it is the responsibility of each complainant to keep track of the reported case. “After a person has reported a crime, a docket will immediately be opened. A text message will then be sent to you with a case number. If a suspect is known, he/she will be arrested,” said Colonel Morobi. People were encouraged to report crime when it happened in their area, and told that the decision to prosecute lay with the prosecutor and only if there was enough evidence.

Some community members at the event raised concerns about accessing legal aid to help them with their cases. Tshenolo Masha from Legal Aid South Africa (SA) explained what services they render and who Legal Aid SA assists. “We usually assist unemployed people who cannot afford the services of a lawyer, but if you are employed we look at your affordability rate and determine if you can afford to pay for legal services or not,” she said.

Vusi Vilakazi, a member of the Alexandra community expressed his delight about the outreach saying that the information was empowering. “I have learned about the law and structures of the justice system. It is good to see that there are organisations like Legal Aid that assist people like us who are unable to pay the exorbitant amounts that lawyers usually charge”, he said.



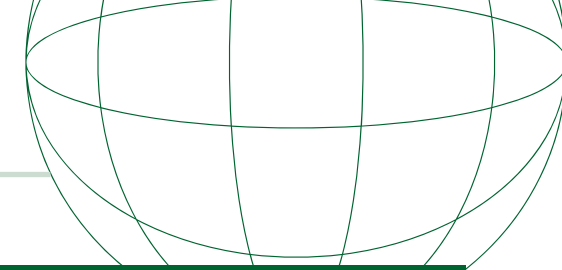
Mr OJM Motsepe said, “This type of information is needed regularly. People need to be educated about their roles and responsibilities in fighting crime. It is appreciated that the NPA with so many stakeholders came to Alexandra to empower the community.”



Ms Mpho Mahane said, “The event was very educational. We appreciate the fact that the SAPS informed us about the processes involved in reporting a crime and how evidence is collected. It was useful that Legal Aid SA was here to tell us how they can assist us with legal matters.”



Ms Duduzile Mgaga said, “The information has helped to change my perception about crime-fighting in my area. I always thought that the police are the ones who have to work alone in solving cases and making sure that criminals are arrested. But I believe that with my help and that of the community the fight against crime can be won.”



OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION

University and municipality prioritise higher education

By: Nomzamo Zondi, GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal.

Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) in partnership with the Ugu District Municipality hosted an educational career exhibition at Ugi Sports and Leisure Centre on 25 July for Grade 11 and 12 learners in Ugu district. The exhibition benefitted close to 600 learners.

The university and some government departments had exhibits about various courses offered by different faculties of learning. The learners were given an opportunity to visit each stall to gain information about possible career opportunities in the various fields of study.

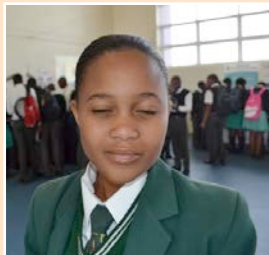
Marketing director of MUT, Mr Len Mzimela, urged learners to give themselves enough time and ask questions because this is their future. “We are here for you, and will guide you to making an informed choice about your career”, he stressed. District Chairperson for Special Programmes, Councillor Sandra Mohammed, addressed the formal programme for the learners. She had a hearty message of support for the learners: “As young people, don’t sit back and fold your arms. Get out there and make it your business to know what’s happening around you. Education is key!”

The educators of different schools appreciated the platform created by the institution.

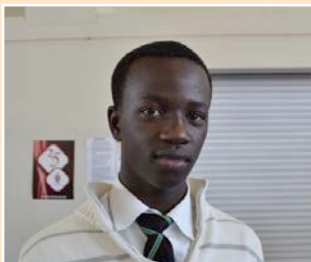
Government continues to partner with stakeholders in ensuring that learners make a contribution to the country’s growth by guaranteeing that education is the top priority.



Learners visit the exhibits of MUT’s (left) biochemistry and agriculture departments.



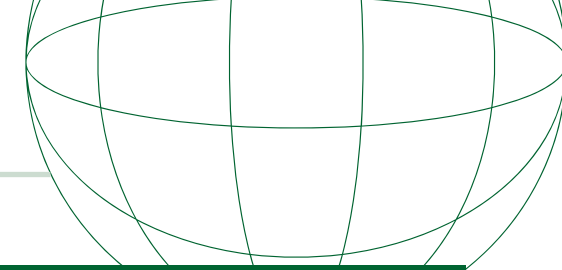
Zinhle Cele Mcushwa High said, “This is the first time I have been to a career expo. I am happy that MUT has brought the university to our district to teach us about different careers. I learnt how many points I need to have for different qualifications. I have an interest in agriculture because the President said the country must focus on the agricultural sector.”



Mpilo Zondo Olwandle High said, “I enjoyed the information sharing. We were taught about the opportunities available in the university. I want to study architecture and I learnt about how many points I need to get into the faculty.”



From left: Councillor Sandra Mohammed (Ugu Special Programme Portfolio chair), Mr Len Mzimela (MUT Marketing Director), Councillor J De Wet (Deputy Mayor of Hibiscus Coast Local Municipality) and Mrs Sindi Jakaza (Acting District Manager, Department of Education)



OUTCOME 9: RESPONSIVE, ACCOUNTABLE, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

Qamata Mechanisation Centre brings farmers hope

By: Vuyani Sibene

The Chris Hani District Municipality (CHDM) in the Eastern Cape is a rural municipality made up of eight local municipalities namely Emalahleni, Engcobo, Inkwanca, Intsika Yethu, Inxuba Yethemba, Lukhanji, Sakhisizwe and Tsolwana.

Agriculture is the main activity but not the main contributor to the district’s economy because it is underdeveloped. To ensure that the agricultural sector contributes to job creation, to promoting opportunities to earn a livelihood and contributing to sustained social and economic growth and development, the CHDM in partnership with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) and the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) identified the establishment of the Qamata Mechanisation Centre as a strategy to modernise the sector.

Establishing the centre gave black farmers access to a wide range of machinery and equipment required for farming operations and for enhanced production. Mechanisation is viewed as part of long-term broad-based economic development strategy aimed at economic growth and agro-industrialisation.

The CHDM and its stakeholders have shown their commitment to increasing primary production in crops grown in all the areas as identified by the District Development Agenda and to achieving the long-term goal of establishing processing plants in the region. This drive is complemented by the national Integrated Food and Nutrition Security Initiative (IFNSI) being driven by the Masibambisane Rural Development Initiative (MRDI) to increase the number of hectares planted for the 2013/14 season and beyond. The MRDI is a presidentially led initiative to ensure speedy implementation of development projects in agriculture and rural development through presidentially facilitated public private partnerships.

The MRDI targets communities occupying communal land that falls under the jurisdiction of traditional authorities, and beneficiaries of land reform. Maize and dry beans as main staples will be prioritised. Other crops, such as sunflower, potatoes, sweet potatoes, sorghum and groundnuts, will also be considered. This is based on the suitability of these crops in the various parts of the six provinces selected to participate.



The Mayor of Intsika Yethu, Councillor Koliswa Vimbayo said, “The advantages of the massive food production objectives for food security can be met while surplus can be sold at a profit and thus more hectares can be planted. Further downstream economic activities can be unlocked such as livestock production that depends on crop production for feed, which is the gold of Intsika Yethu Local Municipality.”



The CHDM Executive Mayor, Councillor Mxolisi Koyo said, “This initiative has the potential to unlock economic potential in the Chris Hani District making use of the competitive advantage of the region, which is land. At the same time it addresses inequality as more women become involved in agriculture.”



Mayor of Intsika Yethu, Koliswa Vimbayo, Executive Mayor of Chris Hani District Mxolisi Koyo and Chief Mathanzima Dalimvula tour the Qamata Mechanisation Centre

The leadership and communities that attended the programme.