



MYDISTRICTTODAY



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PRIORITY 6: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFER COMMUNITIES.

Stakeholders promote children's rights and awareness on drug abuse

By Kgomotso Sentso and Mpho More; GCIS, Northern Cape

On 25 February 2025, the Government Communication and Information System, in collaboration with the Northern Cape departments of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA), Human Settlements, Social Development, South African Police Service and non-governmental organisations Safety Participants, Women Against Crime and the Shane Griqua Development Centre, visited the Xhunkhwesa Combined School in Platfontein, which is a !Xun and Khwe San community.

The visit aimed to raise awareness on drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, gender-based violence and femicide and bullying in schools. Stakeholders encouraged learners to say "No" when faced with uncomfortable situations and immediately report such behaviour to their teachers, parents or guardians.

Ms Modiegi Mncanyana, an Anti-Substance Abuse Social Worker, said: "There has been an outcry from the school, as they have noticed that the

children are now abusing drugs and are being used to traffic the substances; therefore, today we came to provide awareness of what they need to be doing to prevent that and the effects and the results of abusing drugs."

The programme included an engaging and interactive session with the learners, where they were split into different groups to allow the various stakeholders to engage directly with them and offer advice and support on how to tackle the challenges they face. Sanitary towels were donated to the school to ensure that learners had access to necessary hygiene products and help reduce absenteeism.

The Principal of the school, Ms Mumtaaz Newman, expressed her gratitude to all the stakeholders who recognised a need for the visit and expressed hope that there would be more sessions such as these in future.



Learners listening to stakeholders engaging with them in groups.



Sanitary towels donated to the school by COGHSTA.



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Ms Alice O'Connor from the Shane Griqua Development Centre said:

"A lot of children do not know their rights, and we are here to educate and inform them about their rights and responsibilities."



Ms Mumtaaz Newman, Principal at Xhunkhwesa Combined School said:

"I can see that the stakeholders really want to be involved and help the school. I went to the different learner groups, and I could hear that all the problems I had mentioned were addressed."



Mr Leonard Dickson, a Community Development Worker said:

"I am happy that as stakeholders we came to the school to address critical issues. I hope that learners grasped what we spoke about and will listen to our advice."

PRIORITY 2: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HEALTH.

Democracy Bus puts a spark into Back-to-School campaign

By Lehlohonolo March and Nkosana Mziwakhe; GCIS, North West

The Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality (NMMDM), in partnership with the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), hosted the Democracy Bus at Setlagole Village in the Ratlou Local Municipality on 17 January 2025. This initiative aimed to profile and showcase service delivery achievements by government, with a focus on 30 years of Freedom and Democracy in South Africa. The theme for January focused on a Back-to-School campaign, aligned to efforts in support of education and community development.

The Executive Mayor of NMMDM, Cllr Khumalo Molefe, visited the newly built Mokala Primary School to distribute school shoes to disadvantaged learners, showcase a fire simulation exercise to educate them on fire safety practices and held educational awareness talks on food safety, focusing on the safe operation of tuckshops, as well as lessons on how to respond effectively to flood disasters.

In attendance at the event was Kgosi Mokoto, councillors, the School Management Team, School Governing Body and the Mayor of Ratlou Local Municipality, Cllr Matlhomola Jafta, who volunteered to buy full school uniform for four disadvantaged learners.

In his remarks, Cllr Molefe highlighted that the aim of the roadshow was to profile the progress brought by democracy on infrastructure development, specifically the building of new schools and the establishment of the first community radio station, Ratlou FM, in a rural area such as Setlagole.

As he concluded, the Executive Mayor congratulated the Matric Class of 2024 on their outstanding achievements, indicating that their hard work, dedication and perseverance paid off.



Executive Mayor Molefe welcomes back the learners and handed over school shoes.



GCIS official, Mr Kagisho Meremetsi, outlining the purpose of the event to both the learners and parents at the school.



Learners of the Mokala Primary School disembarking from the Democracy Bus.

PRIORITY 4: BUILDING A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

Induction of new students at Majuba TVET College's Dundee Campus

By Thandinkosi Zulu; GCIS, Kwa-Zulu Natal

Majuba Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College's Dundee Campus, under the leadership of Mr Patrick Mbatha, the Campus Manager, held a comprehensive induction for new students on 6 February 2025. The event aimed to bring together internal and external stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition for new students, as well as to introduce them to the college's academic offerings, campus and student support services such as health and wellness facilities.

Internal stakeholders, including subject matter experts, student support staff and the Campus Management Team, orientated the new students on academic expectations, campus safety and available resources. They offered guidance on how students can navigate their academic experience, from study techniques to personal development in general.

Stakeholders such as Capitec and First National Bank, the departments of Health, Social Development, Human Settlements, Employment and Labour, as well as Higher Education and Training, were also present to offer their respective services. These stakeholders shared valuable insights into the rights and responsibilities of the students.

The event fostered a collaborative environment where students, staff and external partners could interact, exchange ideas and build meaningful connections. This initiative reinforced Majuba TVET College's commitment to providing a holistic educational experience that prepares students for success in both the classroom and in social situations.



New students attend orientation at the Majuba TVET College.



Mr Sello Mphalo said:

“Workshops like this are very important for us as men because there are so many issues that we never discuss. Mental illness is happening, and we men are in denial of it and in most cases, we abuse substances to treat it. Stakeholders who are here went a long way in providing us with places that offer help for what we suffer from.”



Mr Romeo Thatoe said:

“As men we need to understand that we play a crucial role in speaking against GBVF. It is important that we report perpetrators who we know and provide support to survivors.”

PRIORITY 6: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFER COMMUNITIES.

Empowering men to be part of the solution to end GBVF

By Tshidi Mokoka; GCIS, Gauteng

On Friday, 28 February 2025, the Department of Social Development (DSD) in collaboration with key stakeholders, hosted a gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) dialogue in Munsieville, Krugersdorp. The event targeted men in the area, aiming to raise awareness, educate and facilitate discussions on the impact of GBVF and men's role in tackling it.

The dialogue emphasised the importance of community engagement and activism among men, encouraging them to advocate for programmes supporting victims. It also highlighted the potential for perpetrators to change their behaviour and seek help from local organisations that deal with issues of GBVF. Mental illness among men was identified as one of the factors contributing to them abusing women, as statistics indicate that men are three times more likely to die by suicide than women. Mr Sosthenius Mafa, a Mental Health Nurse from Munsieville Mental Health Clinic, encouraged men to ask for help when they felt mentally overwhelmed. “Most men grew

up being discouraged from expressing their emotions, but rather showing strength at all times. It is only when this is impossible that they end up abusing substances that may lead to them either committing crimes or being perpetrators of violence in their homes,” he said. He encouraged participants to use the services offered at the clinic and to contact organisations such as the Westview Clinic and the DSD, where they will be assisted to change for the better.

Other stakeholders in attendance included Westrand District Health, Gauteng Department of Community Safety, Community Development Workers from the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and staff members from the Westview Clinic.

This initiative marked a crucial step towards involving men in the fight against GBVF, thereby promoting a safer community for all.



Ms Lindokuhle Nhlathathi from the Mental Health unit at Westrand District Health and Mr Jose Nhabinde from the Department of Community Safety, addressing men who were part of the dialogue in Munsieville.



Participants at the dialogue raising questions and participating in the discussions.