

Did you know?



38% of respondents to the Victims of Crime Survey 2012 believe that the level of violent crime had decreased in their area of residence.



MY DISTRICT TODAY

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

Violence victims speak out

By Robbie Senoelo: GCIS Gauteng



Chief Mabena (with the stick) joins the women's march to raise awareness about gender-based violence.



Women on the move – highlighting issues related to gender-based violence.



After the march and the motorcade, the audience listened to presentations in the Town Hall.

The plight of victims of gender-based violence was highlighted with a march and a motorcade through the streets of Ekangala, Tshwane East, as part of Women's Month activities. The Ekangala SAPS' Victim Empowerment and Support Unit, in conjunction with the GCIS and other stakeholders, held the march against abuse and gender-based violence against women on Thursday, 8 August 2013.

The march and motorcade started at 9:00 at the local clinic and proceeded to Dark City, where a meeting was held at the Town Hall. Various speakers highlighted the importance of speaking out against this scourge and encouraged victims to seek help. Relevant informational products were also distributed.

Ms Prudence Mdluli from Social Crime Prevention urged all silent victims of gender-based and domestic violence to break their silence and speak out against these evils. "If you find yourself at the receiving end, ignore the stigma, ignore the perceived shame. Speak out and seek help. By seeking help you will be helping other silent victims," said Ms Mdluli.

Representing the traditional leadership in the area, Chief Mabena praised the societal nurturing role played by women from the cradle to the grave. "There is no man born without a woman, from conception to birth, burping to teething, crawling to walking, stuttering to talking – a woman will be there," the chief said. He however cautioned women from keeping mum when their breadwinner spouses or partners physically

abuse them. "He may be supporting the family, but if he physically abuses you, speak out or leave. It may not be easy to leave; but for your safety, leave!" concluded Chief Mabena.

The event ended with a radio interview on Kangala Community Radio Service, in which various experts conveyed the campaign's key messages to a wider audience.

This event highlighted how the GCIS succeeds in cascading and highlighting issues relating to gender-based violence, domestic abuse, as well as abuse of women and children using various communication platforms (namely the march, presentations, distribution of information and a radio interview).

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Progress was made with the provision of free basic education for all, with over eight million learners (approximately 70 % of all learners) now in no-fee schools.

OUTCOME 1: IMPROVED QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION

One-school-a-week handover programme on track

By Sabelo Kakaza: GCIS Eastern Cape



The quest continues to eradicate inappropriate structures used as schools as another new school has been handed over. The Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Enver Surty, presided over the handing over of Mqokolweni Senior Primary School to the community of Dikela in the Libode district in the Eastern Cape.

The school forms part of the Accelerated School Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI), a national programme that addresses school infrastructure backlogs in the country – especially inappropriate, unsafe and mud schools. The school was built with a budget of less than R10 000. It consists of a Grade R classroom, seven classrooms, a multimedia centre, library and computer centre. Some 78 temporary employment opportunities were created and four small businesses were subcontracted.

Eastern Cape communities have been prioritised to receive new schools because of school infra-

structure challenges experienced in the province. ASIDI falls under the care of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission, which aims to roll out infrastructure delivery in the country.

The Minister of Basic Education officially launched the one-school-a-week campaign on 17 July 2013 at the handover ceremony of Mandela Park Primary School in Mthatha. This coincided with the celebration of the 95th birthday of former President Nelson Mandela. The occasion was used to demonstrate Madiba's passion for education, especially his rallying call for business to invest in education by building schools in needy communities.

Government's contribution toward replacing inappropriate school structures through ASIDI has become a significant milestone for the expansion of access to basic education for all South African children. The new schools complement the Department of Basic Education's efforts in its fight against inequality in education.

Local community members, cultural dancers and school choirs provided entertainment as the state-of-the-art institution was delivered to them.

The educators and learners at Mqokolweni are happy that the new school has made learning and teaching convenient. Learners are now able to get computer lessons in a fully equipped computer laboratory with laptops. This is another move to ensure that learners have the opportunity to

access information technology. The standard facilities in all the new schools include a multipurpose centre, library, science lab, dedicated Grade R centre, decent sanitation facilities and administration block.

The handover was attended by, among others, district education officials and the local community, and was marked by song and dance as the community celebrated a milestone in their journey towards a better future for their children.

In his speech, the Deputy Minister pointed out that government had made education an apex priority, adding that what had once been a bleak prospect was now a promising future. Encouraging learners to make the best possible use of their brand new facilities, the Deputy Minister declared that everyone should take ownership of education.

The second phase of the campaign will see the inclusion of schools to be completed towards the end of the year.

Did you know?



95% of households now have access to running water.



One of the water taps of the reticulation water project in Muyexe that has been completed recently to improve water supply to the community.



Mthavini Makhubela from Muyexe, with the many 25-litre water containers that she used to save water whenever water was available in the taps.

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

Muyexe water infrastructure improved

By Collins Ndlovu: GCIS Limpopo



Members of the Community Work Programme push wheelbarrows carrying 25-litre water containers while searching for water to keep their projects going.

The completion of the water reticulation project in Muyexe was a great relief to the community, especially the women. In August 2009, President Jacob Zuma identified Muyexe as a national pilot project for the Rural Comprehensive Development Programme. The visit by the President, with an army of his ministers, was a positive indication that government was committed to addressing serious challenges in Muyexe.

A deadline for the project in Mopani District Municipality was announced by the Minister of Water Affairs, Edna Molewa, during the Siyahlola campaign on 25 June 2013, after other alternative sources of water had failed to provide enough water to the community.

Before the completion of the project, the community would spend many days without a drop of water from the taps, which made

life miserable for them. They could only access water occasionally at night, and then it would often not be enough. "I have many 25-litre containers that I saved to fill up whenever water was available in the taps," says Mthavini Makhubele.

Government viewed the situation of the people of Muyexe as a serious problem. Efforts were explored to make water available, including the provision of water harvesting tanks to every household, followed by the drilling of 26 boreholes. But all these efforts failed dismally to provide enough water to the community. "We had to buy water from the people who drilled the boreholes at R1 per 25 litres of water," according to Mthavini.

The continued shortage of water impacted negatively on many projects, which are solely dependent on water for survival. The hardest-

hit projects were the community food gardens, poultry farms, backyard gardens and brick-making projects. Members of the projects had to go and look for water that they could use for their activities. "We would go out and search for water that we were supposed to use for our daily projects," says Vhelaphi Hlungwani, a member of the Community Work Programme.

The recent water reticulation project to supply more water to Muyexe was government's way of ensuring that people finally had enough water. Water is being reticulated from Nandon Dam to the larger part of the Mopani district.

Did you know?



South Africa's public investment rate stands at 19,1% of GDP in the fourth quarter of 2012.



Correctional officials (from left, back row): Mr J Seoloane (acting area commissioner), Mr S Mndaw. (From left, front): Ms M Tshotlego, Mr A Tsetsane (regional commissioner), Ms M Swart (tutor) and Ms O Stander (tutor).



Some of the breathtaking artworks produced by inmates at the Klerksdorp Correctional Centre.

OUTCOME 5: A SKILLED AND CAPABLE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT AN INCLUSIVE GROWTH PATH

New skills at correctional centres

By Xolani Mndaweni: GCIS North West



Two of the inmates at the Klerksdorp Correctional Centre showing off their sewing and embroidery skills.

On Monday 26 August 2013, the Department of Correctional Services welcomed the donation of 10 sewing and embroidery machines to its Klerksdorp Correctional Centre, as a giant leap in its public-private partnership. The brand new state-of-the-art machines were sponsored by Sun International, in partnership with Singer Sewing Company.

"This is a watershed moment for the Klerksdorp centre, since it will be the first time we introduce sewing and embroidery skills here," said a delighted Mr Alfred Tsetsane, the regional commissioner. "We have previously (in 2012) introduced these skills at the Mogwase Correctional Centre, and we continue to strengthen this partnership between the private sector and government for the benefit of inmates and society."

Education and skills development are central to the Minister of Correctional Services' vision, which aims to turn all correctional facilities into centres of learning and excellence. "Some of the people come here not even being able to write their names, but they leave knowing not only how to write, but also empowered with artistic, business and artisan skills," said a proud tutor, Marthie Swart.

Upon interviewing some of the inmates who have been part of the programme for fine arts skills development, we received astounding feedback. "When I leave the correctional centre, I will no longer have a reason to do crime because I have attained skills that will help me earn a living and do good for the community," said inmate Thabo*. Frans van Niekerk*, another inmate, said, "I'm planning to open up my

own art studio and business so I can train other community members in art. This will create jobs and beautify our community!"

Through these ground-breaking skills development initiatives the Government is optimistic that it will break the cycle of crime and re-offending.

Did you know?



Total employment has increased by more than 3,5 million since 1994.

OUTCOME 5: A SKILLED AND CAPABLE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT AN INCLUSIVE GROWTH PATH

Business development opportunities in Zululand

By Nonhlanhla Sithole: GCIS KwaZulu-Natal



Business people who attended the seminar at the opening of the seminar by Mr Herman Mashaba.



GCIS official, Jacob Mkhize answered questions from the SMMEs

On 1 August, the Zululand Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ZCCI), in conjunction with government departments and the private sector, organised a seminar in Richard's Bay to address issues of small, medium and micro enterprise (SMME) development.

The president of the ZCCI, Mr Thula Mkhwanazi, in his opening remarks indicated that the aim of the seminar was to open up opportunities for small businesses to interact with stakeholders. He further reminded SMMEs of their significant contribution to the country's economy.

Award-winning chairman of the Free Market Foundation and one of South Africa's leading

business figures, Mr Herman Mashaba, shared his secrets of success with small business owners. He advised business people to grab opportunities and make the most of them, and not to rely on luck but to make things happen. He emphasised that business people are in business to make money – not to lose it.

In line with government's commitment of uplifting SMMEs, the departments of labour, economic development, trade and industry, and National Treasury, assisted SMMEs with information regarding enterprise development, business registration, applications for unemployment insurance and labour issues, registration on the government database, tax

compliance issues and incentive schemes available to develop SMMEs.

The private sector heeded the call from government to work together to do more by providing assistance, including addressing bankable business plans, access to SMME funding and finance, information to develop sustainable entrepreneurs, the Mondi Zimele Job Fund, access to corporate opportunities, budgeting and cash-flow issues, and more.

Did you know?



By March 2012, 814 victim-friendly rooms were created at police stations throughout the country to render better services to victims of crime.



One of the men defending themselves against statutory rape, saying that young girls lie about their age.



A mother telling others that discipline begins at home, and that all her children are grown up, but they still respect her because that is what she taught them.

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

Taking the war on abuse to the streets

By Galaletsang Bosman: GCIS Northern Cape

An awareness campaign against the abuse of women and children held at a Kimberley taxi rank sparked a huge debate regarding the abuse of women and children.

The issue of statutory rape and its penalties was the central focus of the day. Some of the men argued that young girls trapped them into engaging in sexual relationships by lying about their ages. Others said women needed to respect themselves and their bodies by dressing appropriately.

This came as the public was granted the opportunity to pose questions and offer solutions. It allowed stakeholders the chance to network. Ikhaya Lethu, a non-governmental organisation providing support to abused women and children, used the campaign to promote its services while stressing the different types of abuse.

Ms Zandi Deyi from Thuthuzela said women should know their rights and men had to protect the rights of women and children as vulnerable groups.

The GCIS, Independent Police Investigative Directorate, the South African Social Security Agency (Sassa) and Thuthuzela care centres also used the campaign to convey valuable messages.



Community members listening to speakers at the taxi rank.



The speaker from Thuthuzela, Ms Zandi Deyi (in the yellow T-shirt), addressing the people.



A young man asking Zandi a question during the Thuthuzela presentation.



This woman encouraged men to ask for young girls' IDs before sleeping with them to avoid landing in jail because of statutory rape.



Sassa official Innocentia Mosemeng used the opportunity to urge beneficiaries who have not registered for cards to do so before the deadline.

ASSESSING HEALTH OF OUR EDUCATION

There will be an unusual silence in classrooms across the country today. The sounds of teaching and learning will come to a halt for a good purpose.

This morning more than seven million pupils in the foundational (grades 1 to 3) and intermediate phase (grades 4, 6 and 9) in public schools and certain independent schools are in examination mode.

They will over the next three days be tested on their literacy and numeracy skills in Annual National Assessments (ANA), standardised tests undertaken by the Department of Basic Education.

The purpose of these assessments is to track and benchmark the literacy and numeracy levels in the country and measure them against our targets. The results will also guide school programmes in these areas of learning.

The government has set a national benchmark of 60% of pupils attaining acceptable levels in literacy and numeracy by next year and 90% by 2024.

ANA draws from our experience and participation in international assessment programmes, which makes it a world-class initiative. It places South Africa on a par with countries such as the United States that also conducts its own assessment through the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

The government places emphasis on these assessments as they identify problems in the education system and help in developing targeted interventions.

Historically, we have relied on measuring performance of pupils at the end of Grade 12, which is often too late for meaningful intervention.

Information from these tests have assisted schools to improve their academic plans, identify challenges in the curriculum, develop teachers and to identify additional learning materials.

Trends in the ANA results show a steady increase in the performance. In Grade 3, literacy performance improved from 35% in 2011 to 52% last year while numeracy performance increased from 28% to 41%.

In Grade 6, performance in languages stood at 43% last year compared to 28% in 2011.

In his State of the Nation Address President Jacob Zuma said, The Annual National Assessments in our schools have become a powerful tool of assessing the health of our education system.

“We welcome the improvement each year in the ANA results, but more must be done to improve maths, science and technology.”

In Grade 6 maths performance decreased to 27% last year compared with 30% in 2011. Grade 9 learners who were assessed for the first time last year performed above 50% in literacy, but low in mathematics.

For many of our critics the ANA results are an end in themselves used to bemoan the work undertaken in education. Contrary to this, ANA is the first step in raising our performance and building a better education system.

The Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, said, “The particularly low learner performance in maths at the intermediate and senior phases justifies the steps we have already taken to focus on teacher professional development and provision of learning and teaching support materials at the higher school grades.”

It is however not all doom and gloom in maths and science. The 2011 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) for South Africa pointed to large improvements in the maths and science competencies of grade nines when compared to those tested in 2002.

South Africa’s improvement in maths of 67 TIMSS points between 2002 and 2011, or seven points a year on average, is among the sharpest recorded by participants.

The Government’s commitment to education is demonstrated through its strong financial support of R207 billion. This accounts for 21% of our national budget and more than 5% of gross domestic product, which places South Africa in the same league as developed countries such as the United States, Netherlands and Austria.

We should however point out that our financial commitment has not always translated into the gains we have wanted. It is through initiatives such as ANA that we will ensure a better return on investment. In this regard, R167 million has been allocated to expand the assessment system over the next three years.

Since 1994, the Government has strengthened the education system, which remains the cornerstone of our efforts to overcome many of the social and economic challenges we inherited.

We have recorded key successes in education. The 2012 *Development Indicators* show an 18,4% increase between 2007 and 2011 in children under the age of four years attending early childhood development facilities.

Furthermore, the number of children enrolled in Grade R doubled between 2003 and 2011 from 300 000 to 705 000. Last year the numbers of enrolments at primary school between girls and boys were almost equal.

We have provided free basic education to more than eight million pupils in no-fee schools. In addition, our national nutrition programme provides meals to about 8,8 million pupils, and increased from 4,9 million in 1999.

ANA is one of our successes programmes and we encourage everyone to use it to help build our education system.

Parents play a central role and must invest time in their children’s schooling. Through ANA, they are provided with a clear picture of their children’s performance to support their studies at home.

Education is central to development of the country. Parents, guardians and community leaders who interact with young people should support government’s programme of improving our education system.