
DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MEDIA STATEMENT

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MONTH

October marks Social Development Month and during this month, government highlights programmes aimed at fighting poverty and building a caring society for a better life for all.

Since 1994 the Department's social services have substantially improved the lives of the most vulnerable South Africans. The number of South Africans benefitting from grants increased from 2.5 million in 1993 to more than 16 million by mid-2014. The child support grant was introduced in 1998 with 70 000 beneficiaries. Currently more than 11 million children benefit from it. Research has shown that grants reduce poverty, improve wealth distribution and generate economic growth within communities.

Government's interventions in Early Childhood Development are already bearing fruit with better achievement levels among learners in the Foundation Phase. In 2011 Government also started to roll out the Food for All Campaign as a measure to address incidents of extreme hunger and malnutrition. Limpopo Province recently officially opened the Provincial Food Distribution Centre and Community Nutrition Distribution Centres that aim to address hunger and malnutrition in all communities.

However, the Department's services extend beyond rendering social services and provision of grants through its agency SASSA. The Department's services also include child protection services; foster care; adoption services; services to the

youth, older persons and persons with disabilities; anti-substance abuse programmes; home community-based care and support programmes for individuals and families affected by HIV and AIDS and community development projects.

This year's Social Development month is celebrated under the theme: "Improving the DSD Sector Footprint". This theme stems from the national department's commitment towards government's National Development Plan Vision 2030. The Department of Social Development has been given the task of facilitating social protection imperatives outlined in the NDP, by coordinating Outcome 14: "an inclusive and responsive social protection system". This will be achieved by, among others:

- ensuring a standard of living below which no-one falls;
- developing measures to address poverty;
- support to early childhood development and investments in children and
- protective measures for nutrition and food security

The key objectives of Social Development month is to engage communities with the purpose of, among others:

- Promoting social development services;
- Celebrating key achievements on government programmes;
- Highlighting the plight of vulnerable citizens;
- Creating community awareness;

During the month of October, the Department of Social Development in Limpopo will be engaging in the following activities, apart from ongoing programmes and projects:

7th October 2015: Provincial Golden Games. Our older persons take part in sporting activities for their own health, longevity. It is their right according to the Older Persons Act, to be included in recreational activities.

The games will be held at the Thohoyandou Stadium, Thulamela Municipality, Vhembe District, starting at 11:00

9th October 2015: Observing Mental Health Day. The effects of old age; disability or disease may lead to mental illness among the people of Limpopo. We will be raising awareness of the fact that so many of our people are affected by this and focus on their rights. The event will be observed in the Mopani District

15th October 2015: Observing International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (Official day is the 17th of October). This day is especially significant in the Limpopo Province, which is especially vulnerable to extreme poverty, hunger and malnutrition. The event will be held in the Capricorn District.

More information on exact venues, dates and times will be communicated in due time. For more information, please contact Adele van der Linde, Media Liaison Officer.

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Issued by: Adele van der Linde
Media Liaison Officer
079-696-5625
(015) 293-6608
limpopo.socialdevelopment@gmail.com
adele.vanderlinde@dhsd.lijmpopo.gov.za