



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

E-News



MECs Nandi Ndalane and Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya celebrate the youth of South Africa during Provincial Youth Day celebrations

2023-24 *Quarter 1*

YOUTH DIALOGUES

Images from the Provincial Youth Dialogues held at Mookgpphong Primary School, Waterberg District.



UNFPA Courtesy Visit

On the 21st of April 2023, all roads led to the Bela Bela Multipurpose Centre situated in the Waterberg District of Limpopo. The Department of Social Development in conjunction with the Department of Basic Education, the Department of Health, The United Nation Population Fund Program (UNFPA) and the Local Municipality

By Queensly Kupa

invited the youth of the surrounding areas in establishing and addressing the social ills they face such as teenage pregnancies, unsafe abortions, substance abuse, and the high rate of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections among the residents but especially the youth of Bela Bela.

Attendees included dignitaries from the Office of the Premier, the Vhembe District of the province, the South African Police



Service (SAPS), Love Life, three schools of which two are schools catering for special needs learners and the public. The day started with a briefing by Mr. Thulani Mbatha of the UNFPA, who pointed out that the programme being rolled out, aimed at strengthening the institutional capacity to deliver youth-friendly and integrated Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), HIV and GBV services at all levels. The briefing was followed by an entourage of 10 dignitaries selected to visit Huis Talje, a home for children living with disabilities and especially cerebral palsy and a visit to the Bela Bela Clinic, before heading to the main venue. During the main programme, Mr. Innocent Modisaotsile, the Officer in Charge of the UNFPA emphasised the primary objective of the UNFPA as advocating and educating the youth, mainly young girls, and women on SRHR. He also advised that society needs to acknowledge that people living with disabilities also have SRHR needs.

Chief Director for Social Welfare Services in Limpopo, Ms. Dudu Setlatjile highlighted the importance of working in partnership with the youth as opposed to working for the youth. A sentiment proven accurate and effective as the young attendees responded gleefully to a testimony and speech given by Ms. Bontle Mathabatha, a powerhouse who captivated her audience by advising them to make use of organisations and opportunities available to them like Love Life, to take charge of their lives, and to stay motivated to learn and even relearn, to

make assertive and informed decisions in all aspects of life. “We as the youth of today must leave empowering and impactful footprints so that the youth of tomorrow can be more than we are. In so doing, the spread HIV/AIDS can be stopped, the high numbers of teenage pregnancies can be reduced, and we will not shame, discriminate nor stigmatise against our substance abusing peers; instead, we will support and guide them back to their purpose”, Bontle said. In closing, Bontle asked the adults not to turn a blind eye when their friends or colleagues date a minor as the pandemic of ‘Blesser/ Blessee’ relationships are a leading cause of teenage pregnancies.

She also addressed the stigmatisation experienced by teenage girls and members of the LGBTQI+ community looking for reproductive health assistance and information from health officials which results in a fear of going to health facilities and suffering in silence. This notion implies that the efforts of government and supporting entities such as Love Life and the UNFPA bandage social ills wounds as opposed to solving the issues at hand.

It is clear from the activities of the day and the remarks by all speakers that the youth are well underway in taking responsibility for their own future. As a small token of support, the UNFPA also handed over ten thousand sanitary packs for distribution in the Vhembe and Waterberg districts of the Limpopo province.



SOCIAL SERVICES ON YOUR DOORSTEP

By Piet Bambo



On a crisp June morning, around 160 officials from various departments took to the dusty streets of Setumong village, Ga-Matlala, in the Polokwane Municipality. The aim: to visit households, door-to-door, to assess their individual situations and bring services closer to the people. The aptly named “Bob Mmola Door to Door Campaign” was an initiative of the Capricorn District of Limpopo Social Development but is soon to be rolled out to other districts, due to its effectiveness. The campaign was named after the late seasoned politician and former Director in the Department of Social Development, Mr. Bob Mmola, who served his people diligently.

After a brief visit to the local traditional leader of Bakone ba Matlala a Thaba, Kgoshikgadi Matlala, MEC Nandi Ndalane greeted and encouraged the growing group of officials, which included social service professionals; community development workers; community health practitioners; ward committee members and officials from the Department of Home Affairs,

SASSA, Limpopo Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs; SAPS; Bakone Traditional Council and NDA. A Home Affairs mobile service unit was also on standby.



In her short but powerful address to the group waiting eagerly to start reaching out to the Setumong community, the MEC amplified the need for social service professionals to take their exper-

tise outside of their offices, right to the doorstep of the people they serve. “In today’s process and beyond, I request you all to be considerate of the needs of the community and show respect and humility at all times”, MEC said.

During the campaign, social service professionals and those supporting them not only gathered information about the household living conditions of that community, to design appropriate interventions and referrals, but they also used the opportunity to inform their clients about the various options in accessing government services in the Limpopo province. Households were asked about, among others, their dependable means of livelihood, contributory factors leading to the state of the household, presence or absence of IDs or birth certificates, educational skills levels, service delivery challenges and then, of course, ample information with regards to any possible Gender Based Violence within the household or the community.

Information gathered during the Bob Mmola Door-to-door Campaign will be summarised and scrutinised for short-, medium- and long-term interventions which will be discussed with relevant stakeholders, together with the traditional council. But more than that, it was yet again humbling and informative to observe social work professionals at work; interacting with households who in turn welcomed their assistance and guidance with open arms. The Campaign is set to become an annual programme in the Capricorn District, and with the other districts wanting to follow suit, it is sure to become an eagerly anticipated occurrence in the Limpopo Province.

LOVE LIFE GIRLS CONQUER THE WATERBERG DISTRICT

By Adèle van der Linde

One Friday afternoon spent in the Waterberg District town of Bela Bela, will teach you that the place is more than just a Limpopo Bushveld town. Better known as the gateway to the economic hub of Gauteng, Bela Bela is a hive of activity of tourists, mixed cultures, labourers and residents of all ages, of this once sleepy town along the R101, halfway to Pretoria. The town derives its name from the geothermic hot springs around which the town was built. It is also the closest town to many game farms, leisure resorts and “golfing in the wild”.

The town and the Bela Bela township, unfortunately, are also plagued by a myriad of social ills; teenage pregnancy being one of the worst. Driving down the streets of the township, the wash lines lined with baby clothes, young girls carrying babies on their backs and toddlers running freely in the dusty streets, are testimony to this.

On a recent courtesy visit from the UNFPA (The United Nations Population Fund) to assess the situation at the New Bela Bela Clinic in the township, two young ladies representing Love Life, the youth-focused HIV-prevention NGO, impressed everyone with their zeal and knowledge. The two relayed their experiences to the team of UNFPA, Health, Education and Social Welfare representatives, first at the clinic and later at an event during which the UNFPA donated sanitary packs to Department.

We wanted to learn more about these dynamic young women, who are occupying the space



of responsible youth, to make a difference in their communities. Kgomotso Macheke is a Groundbreaker at the New Bela Bela Clinic. During the delegation's visit, she confidently explained how it was worrying to her, that she sometimes had to explain to young men - who have already become sexually active - how to use a condom. She also cited substance abuse and STIs as two more of the social ills she encounters daily in her activities. This well-versed young woman claims that due to her youthful age, learners and unemployed youth tend to relate to her better, even though she works closely with social workers on a daily basis. She visits local schools to advertise the services of Love Life and to connect to cases that may need further intervention.

Kgomotso (23 years old) dreams of becoming a teacher. Something which will clearly suit her, since she speaks with authority and explains facts in detail. Her immediate dreams, though, are for every Love Life area in the clinics, to have a "chill room" and WiFi, to further assist groundbreakers and their clinics. She hopes to one day see every clinic in the province having a Groundbreaker, to expand the work of Love Life. Kgomotso says if she could see that happening during her contract period, she will have left a lasting legacy.

When chatting to Bontle Mathabatha, her authority and knowledge on subject matter also impress. Bontle tends to the Thabazimbi Local Youth Centre as a Groundbreaker (Youth Programme Implementer or Peer Tutor) from Mondays to Saturdays. This 23-year-old refers problem cases to the senior counselor, who in turn will refer them to the respective authorities such as Health, SAPS or a social worker. She further gives health talks and runs active lifestyle programmes, all in the name of the prevention of social ills and eventually an HIV-free society. "We provide a space for them to come forward if they need assistance or information.

"Initially I did engineering studies in college, but after doing this particular work, I wish to pursue psychology, social work or project management. I have become keen on following in the footsteps of my supervisors. I have already registered my own business, and when my contract at Love Life comes to an end, I want to pursue my studies and operate my business. My hopes and dreams - however cliché it may sound - are to be the best version of myself. I want to be a successful businesswoman that will keep advocating for vulnerable individuals. I especially want to keep reaching out to women and the youth", says Bontle.

The dynamic young people of Love Life certainly strengthen the hands of social work and health work professionals and in turn, they are learning important life and professional skills. To have these young people fall through the cracks of unemployment will certainly be a shame. They are the epitome of the dynamic, intelligent and willful youth of today, who want to make a change and who want to create safer, healthier and self-reliant communities.



<https://lovelife.org.za/>

Budget Speech **2023/24**



VOTE 12

**Presented by the Hon. MEC
Nandi Ndalane**

**in the Limpopo Provincial
Legislature.**

18th April 2022

Find the full Budget Speech document on our website:

www.dsd.limpopo.gov.za

Under the “NEWSROOM” menu

STOP THE VIOLENCE!

REPORT GBV and Child Abuse:

**SAPS Crime Stop: 08600
10 111**

SMS Crime Line: 32211

**DSD 24-hour Command
Centre: 0800 428 428 (toll-
free) or request a social
worker *120*7867# (free)
from any cell phone.**

**Child Welfare South Africa:
0861 424453.**



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Private Bag X9689

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Fax: 015 962 4623
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Private Bag X5040

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Modimolle, 0510



COVID-19

Together, we can beat
Coronavirus

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A Caring and Self-Reliant Society

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