



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

E-News



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
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ANTI-BULLYING AND GBVF AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

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2021-22 *Quarter 2*

A Caring and Self-Reliant Society

Planning for another unqualified audit opinion

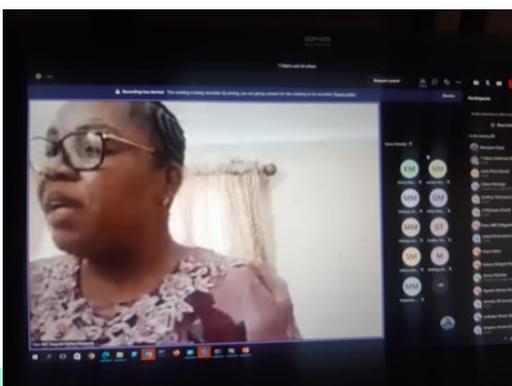
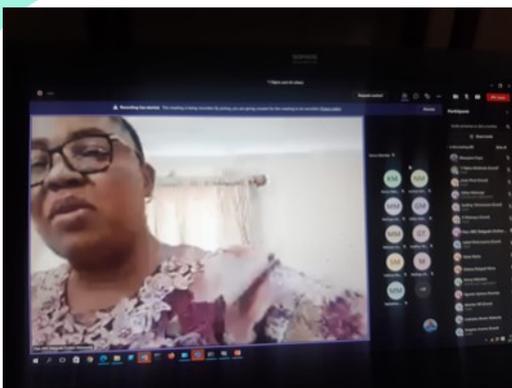
The Department has recently had its annual strategic planning session, partly using a Microsoft Teams and live gathering, so as to ensure proper social distancing.

The session was addressed by the Head of Department, Mr. Desmond Mahopo as well as guest presenters from Limpopo Provincial Treasury and National Department of Social Development.

MEC Nkakareng Rakgoale complimented the team in her address: “This (audit) has been made possible through the team work and spirit of the entire management team, as led by the HOD, Ntate Mahopo. For me this audit opinion is a true reflection on the high level of commitment and dedication displayed by management and the entire workforce of the DSD.”

The planning session also revolved around the current changes in conduct of the country and the measures having to be taken during the COVID-19 pandemic.

MEC Rakgoale also added: “We are urged to imagine a new future for DSD and the people of our province in a post-COVID-19 era: a new future where those we serve are our number one clients and to them, the Department is the number one go-to department when they are faced with challenges.”



MEC Nkakareng Rakgoale and HoD Desmond Mahopo during the virtual Strategic Planning session of the Department



Households Receive Food Parcels



By Khatšo Molokela

The MEC for Social Development Mme Nkakareng Rakgoale visited the Rebone cluster in the Mokgalakwena local municipality area to hand over food parcels to 100 households. The households in 10 villages in the Steiloop area have been identified as food insecure by social workers. The Mokgalakwena Municipality Mayor Malesela Mokwele as well as the Waterberg District MMC Tihalefi Mashamaite joined the MEC in the charitable event. Mo-

mobile cellular network provider MTN made this possible by donating the food parcels.

Child-headed households are amongst those who were assisted through the parcels as they were in dire need of food supplies. The MEC interacted with some of the families as she hand delivered the food parcels. She urged the younger family members to remain rooted in education as it has proven to be a solution in alleviating poverty and improving the lives of many other people who have once found themselves living in these conditions. The families expressed gratitude for the donations and the message of hope shared by the MEC. Mme Nkakareng furthermore passed a word of thanks to MTN for their continued support in ensuring that the lives of the people of Limpopo are improved in the province.



MTN does it again!



By Khatšo Molokela



On the 06th of August 2021, the Ramakanyane Secondary School in the Ga-Mothapo village was graced by the presence of the MEC for Social Development Mme Nkakareng Rakgoale. The purpose of the MEC's visit to the school was to officially hand over tablets donated by MTN to 11 deserving learners of the class of 2019 as well as 5 which are going to be used by the current pupils at the school. According to the MEC, the mandate of such a handover is to bridge the digital divide that largely affects learners coming from disadvantaged backgrounds and belonging to schools in the rural area.

The event follows the MECs visit to the school in 2019 and at the time social ills such as teenage pregnancy, GBV and substance abuse were rife as per the reports of social workers. The MEC stated that the initial visit yielded positive results as 41 out of 47 grade 12 learners passed matric. She furthermore stated that the kind gesture by MTN helps to motivate learners to work very hard to ensure that they contribute positively to the Province's pass rate for this academic year. "We promise that we won't disappoint the MEC with our results and we also hope to perform up to her expectations and even more" said Thomas Sithole, a grade 12 learner at the school.



HOD Implements Gender Strategic Framework

By Oupa Mokgoebo

The Head of the Department Mr. Desmond Mahopo held a successful webinar with all women in senior management of the Department, during Women Senior Management Week on 24 August 2021.



Starting the session with the words “Wathint’ abafazi, whathint’ imboko” he explained that, “These words have continued to reverberate in our ears as an affirmation of the power that women possess in transforming their own conditions and societies they live in. The commemoration of August Month serves as affirmation of the role that women continue to play in changing our socio-economic conditions today.”

The Head of the Department outlined all the eight point principles as per the gender strategic framework and indicated that these principles are complementary approaches towards achieving gender

equality within the department. Emphasis was more on women empowerment amongst women senior managers. Mr. Mahopo highlighted to the session that: “The empowerment of women in South Africa is about dealing with the legacy of apartheid and the transformation of society, particularly the transformation of power relations between women, men, institutions and laws. It is also about addressing gender oppression, patriarchy, sexism and structural oppression.” He further encouraged women in senior management level to include indigenous knowledge into the value chain as a process of empowering all women within the department to address the “pull down syndrome amongst themselves.” He reminded the meeting that it is up to women to ensure that women empowerment becomes a lived reality. “We dare not be happy with the status quo which excludes many women from the social and economic mainstream. “

Gender Strategic Framework continued

He also indicated that it is important that we do not merely talk about women empowerment because it is fashionable to do so, but to continuously measure the progress we are making in this regard so that we can determine what we should do next to improve on our performance. “Accordingly, it will be necessary to make an audit of this progress in the Department. There is no doubt that the public sector has made some progress on the issue of women empowerment compared to prior to the democratic breakthrough. Further, there are 46 % women in senior management level in the department. This is obviously not enough and the department will continue to deal with this challenge until we comply with Cabinet directive” he said.

He gave marching orders that we have a duty to work with organised labour so as to bring to an end the continuing sexual abuse of working women at the work place as well as those seeking employment. “This can be done through awareness campaign of Sexual Harassment Policy the department has just approved” He said.

He emphasized that men should be engaged on this transformation agenda to ensure gender equality and equity becomes a reality within the department and to society at large. He completed the session with these words “if we do not fully empower the women in this department , and advance towards genuine gender equality, the better life for all to which we are committed will remain a mere dream.” **End**

Local Social Worker's Research Impresses

By Adèle van der Linde

Limpopo boasts the first social worker who has published research in an international journal, aside from those doing their Masters or PhD. Eric Mamukeyani from Luckau One Stop Centre in Groblersdal proclaims: “I did it totally voluntarily and for the satisfaction of sharing information”.

Eric matriculated in 2008 from Marimani High School in Mbokota Village, Elim. Not sure what to study and do with the rest of his life, he remembered that social work caught his eye at a career exhibition at school. Laughingly, Eric admits: “At first I thought it's just a job where you talk to people.” However, when going to enroll at University of Venda at first he considered studying law. A church friend, however, found him at the campus and changed his mind to study social work. “I studied under great professors like Prof. D.G Thabede who was well versed in social work theories. His main PhD studies centred around the ‘Africanisation’ of social work, which I found very interesting, to say the least. Some of the theories and approaches of social work, don't necessarily fit into our African context. However, Prof. Thabede recommended the ‘Africanised’ approach to social problems and this will enhance the profession in the African context”.

Local Social Worker's Research Impresses

Very soon, Eric learned that social work is about, in his own words “Touching the hearts of people and changing lives” and he developed a very strong zeal for the profession. He obtained his 2012 and in 2013 was appointed on a 12 month internship with the Department



of Social Development. “When they placed us, I ended up in Sekhukhune. It suited me at the time luckily as my sister is a teacher there. In 2014 I was fortunate enough to be employed full time at the Department,” he recalls.

Asking him what motivated him to write this particular article and to have it published on an international journal, Eric responds: “As social workers, we work with various problems and everyday clients on the ground.

Why are we conducting research of our own but only sharing it for academic purposes? We should be doing it for curiosity sake and the growth of our profession.”

The article is dubbed “Difficulties experienced by caregivers of HIV/AIDS orphans: A qualitative study for

rural-based caregivers” and has been published in the journal called Scientific Research Publishing – the open access library journal (link: <https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation.aspx?paperid=110071>)

“After it was published, I shared it on social media and peer groups on research. I got very positive feedback from especially learned colleagues in the USA and Afghanistan. They called the information “enlightening and helpful”. I’m hoping my findings will be utilised to the benefit of caregivers, the NGO sector and my colleagues alike. I believe that they and other students pursuing a career in the social or health sector will benefit from my research. I have encouraged my colleagues in the Department to also peruse my article and by so doing they will get much needed insight in how to plan for support to NGOs such as Drop-in centres and home based care.”

This busybody husband and father of three is also an avid writer and has combined theology and psychology to write several manuscripts. One of them, a book about how God comforts those in distress, will be published soon. We will keep you updated!

Social Relief of Distress

By Witness Tiva

The Department of Social Development through its Social Relief of Distress programme has assisted five families that have lost all their belongings after all their houses were gutted by fire in separate incidents. Social relief of distress which is a



temporary provision of assistance intended for persons in such a dire material need that they are unable to meet their families' most basic needs, was in the form of food parcels, school uniforms and other basic necessities. The incidents happened in the Waterberg and Mopani Districts of the Province and within an alarming short time span of each other. In an incident that happened at Mokgolobotho village outside Tzaneen in Mopani, the Leseka family lost their entire house after a 64-year old man set alight the building with his wife and five children inside. Fortunately they all escaped the fire and only his



Top left: MEC Rakgoale inspects the Baloyi family house. Left: Handing over aid to the Selotole family. Bottom left and bottom: Visiting the Mathebule family.



Social Relief of Distress continued

wife sustained burn wounds. This incident was related to Gender Based Violence. In other incidents, families in Marapalala village, Maphalle village and another one in Makgakapatje in the Greater Letaba Municipality (Mopani District) suffered the same fate, but the incidents were ruled accidental.

Alfred Baloyi who is the family representative of a family whose RDP house was also gutted in Lephalale, in the Waterberg District, says he appreciates the intervention by both the Department and the local municipality. "I really want to take this opportunity and appreciate what government has done. The department's intervention in this situation will go a long way in terms of ensuring that we are able to pick up the pieces of our lives and move on.

We are happy that we will be provided with food parcels for a period of three months. We are also delighted that municipality has committed to build a new house for us."

Social Development MEC Nkakareng Rakgoale who has visited four of these families, urged communities to be cautious and make sure that their property is protected against fires. She strongly condemned GBV incidents that are still being reported as the country is commemorating women's month.



Bottom left: Visit to the Leseka family.

Bottom right: Inspecting what is left of the dwelling of the Lephale family.



Celebrating our Heritage



SUCCESS FOR THESE FORMER ADDICTS

By Adèle van der Linde

The Seshego Treatment Centre for substance use disorder officially opened its doors in October 2018. The state of the art facility is the only one of its kind in South Africa constructed specifically for the purpose of being a rehabilitation centre. Since its inception, many people seeking treatment for substance abuse have been in and out of the centre. It is not a walk-in facility but cases are referred by social workers, courts and medical experts. Some individuals responded well to treatment but others, as addiction unfortunately goes, relapsed.

Then, in March 2020, the country was suddenly faced with a new challenge when a national

state of lockdown was declared due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Apart from all other logistics, local municipalities in Limpopo had to set up temporary shelters for homeless persons who were, at that moment, roaming and sleeping on the streets. It so happened that three young men, Victor Taba (35), Kgotso Mamodishe (30) and Dennis Kutoane (35), all from the Makhuduthamaga Municipality in Sekhukhune District, were homed in one of the local shelters, residents were screened by health and home affairs officials, the SAPS and social workers, to establish their health status and criminal records,

among other things. Victor, Kgotso and Dennis along with 10 other residents were found to be addicted to substances. The three's drug of choice being the street drug, nyape.



Victor, Kgotso and Dennis when they, along with other homeless people, were admitted to the shelter in Sekhukhune. Dennis is standing in the back, fourth from left (looking up), Victor is seated second from left and Kgabo is seated fourth from the left in the blue shirt.

After being assessed and admitted to Seshego Treatment Centre, social worker Lindiwe Sebei came into their lives. Their programme lasted only three months, but Lindiwe reports, thankfully

SUCCESS FOR THESE FORMER ADDICTS

so, that the three are really on track with their maintained rehabilitation. “Victor and Dennis told me that their temporary stay in Gauteng, before the lockdown, led to their substance abuse, after getting involved with bad influences. Kgotso’s parents passed away when he was still young and the trauma and hardship led to him becoming addicted”, Lindiwe says.

“I am really proud of the three. Although the other 10 who were admitted unfortunately relapsed, I am so satisfied and happy that Victor now works at a tyre replacement centre in Pretoria, Kgotso works at his brother in law’s carwash in Tubatse and even though Dennis is as yet unemployed, he has reverted to Christianity and continues to be on the right track.”

Asking Lindiwe what, according to her, are the major reasons for some people reverting back to addiction and why these three men’s story has a happy outcome, she immediately responds: “Community involvement. We simply cannot help these people overcome addiction without the support of the communities they return to. More extensive work with the other ten may have also reaped more positive results, but unfortunately families and communities may have led them down”. Lindiwe’s hope and certainly that of the whole Province of Limpopo, is that Dennis may also find employment and continue on the long path of healing and staying clean. It is due to dedicated officials like Lindiwe, that three people can continue with healthy and happy lives. It is now up to us, as communities, to support this noble work.

NEED HELP WITH ADDICTION?



SANCA Limpopo

33 Kerk Street, Polokwane

Tel: 015 295 3700

email: info@sancalimpopo.co.za

website: www.sancalimpopo.co.za

For more information on Seshego Treatment Centre and the admission process, visit www.dsd.limpopo.gov.za (Look for “Institutions” on the landing page).



Limpopo mourns the death of 5 children

By Witness Tiva and Adèle van der Linde

The Limpopo MECs for Education, Polly Boshielo and Social Development, Nkakareng Rakgoale in September visited the Sibande and Ngomane families of Phooko village, Elias Motsoaledi Municipality, in the Sekhukhune District. This after the lifeless bodies of three children of the families were found after going missing for two weeks. The entourage started at the Ekucathuleni Primary School where the Sibande and Ngomane children attended school. The bodies of Njabulo (9) and Themba (8) Ngomane and Katlego Sibande (15) were found floating in a nearby river.

Shortly thereafter, the devastating news broke that two more missing children of the Ramphasha family of Senwarwana, Blouberg Municipality in Capricorn District, were also found dead.

Five-year old Tshegofatso and her sister, seven-year old kamogelo Rapasha went missing on the 23rd of August at Morobjane village. MEC Rakgoale and MEC for Transport and Community Safety, Mavhungu Lerule-Rhamakhanya visited the Rapasha family to console them and offer more support.

Social workers assisted all three families since the disappearance of their children. The MECs reiterated their call to parents to always know where their children are and to not leave them alone or with caretakers that may not have their best interests at heart.



FOCUS ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE



The Departments of Social Development and Transport and Community Safety recently embarked on a series of Gender Based Violence and Femicide and Anti-Bullying awareness campaigns around the Limpopo Province.

The MECs for the two departments and a range of speakers from civil society, NPOs, SAPS and faith-based organisations, among others, gathered at Mecklenburg for the session that was also broadcast on social media, so as to reach more people and at the same time observe COVID-19 protocols in place at the time.

Social Development and its partners are continuously seeking a long lasting solution to the scourge of GBVF and bullying that remains prevalent in the Province.

MEC Nkakareng Rakgoale in her address stated that: “We can’t stand by as neighbours and hear a woman or child screaming next door and turn a blind eye or a deaf ear. Not anymore. Now is the time for us to get involved responsibly. We are not saying that citizens must risk their own lives by entering a possibly dangerous situation that may be unfolding, but please become more active in communities and lend a helping hand to women and children who may be suffering. Inform the authorities if you suspect that a child or a woman may be the victims of domestic violence.”

The day also included a visit to one of the projects in the area, funded by Anglo American, who was also a sponsor of the event.

MEC Rakgoale admires one of the creations of the sewing project sponsored by Anglo American. She encouraged the participants in the project to form co-operatives and work together for sustainable development.



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COVID-19

Together, we can beat
Coronavirus

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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