



THE BULLETIN

Official external publication of the Department of Social Development - October - December 2023

FINANCIAL BOOST TO NPOs

THUNTSHA LEROLE



NEW SIGN LANGUAGE

NO TO GBV

HOW TO OPEN AN OLD AGE HOME

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Editorial team

Editor-In-Chief: Petrus Siko
Editor: James Moche

Contributors

Obusitswe Keboneilwe
Duduetsang Mpa
Thabang Tikane
Robert Maswanganyi
Marumo Mogapi

EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to the third edition of The Bulletin external publication. This publication comes to you on a quarterly basis with news that are crafted and refined to empower the readers.

We thank you for your readership which is growing in quantum leaps and bounds. We have received accolades and congratulatory messages from many readers of this publication and its sister electronic newsletter, The Eye. While we welcome these congratulatory messages we dare not to bask in the glories of yesterday but strive to improve this publication so that the readers benefit from every jot and title that we compose with all our concerted efforts.

Dear readers, it goes without saying that the levels of crime, substance abuse and gender-based violence in our country are at a very alarming and concerning rate. These levels are a matter of concern to individuals, families and communities. Therefore, these challenging situations need to be treated as a crisis and as a matter of urgency as they can possibly ruin the socio-economic development of our country.

What is more painful is that our beloved country, South Africa has become a consumer, producer, and transit country for drugs. Socio-economic factors such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment remain key contributing elements to the increased use of drugs and the development of substance use disorders.

The scourge of substance abuse, especially alcohol and other designer drugs have long-term negative effects on the society as they lead to multiple social ills including crime, gender-based violence and teenage pregnancy. It is very disturbing because Nyaope or Woonga and other illicit drugs are gaining popularity among adolescents, with far-reaching effects on users, families and communities.

There are clear signs when someone is doing drugs or substances. A service user experiences withdrawal symptoms when he/she stops taking drugs/alcohol. These symptoms can be shakiness, nausea, sweating and extreme anxiety.

Their bodies have developed tolerance to the drugs as a result they require larger amounts of drugs to get high. Addicted people usually have a strong desire or need to use drugs irrespective of negative consequences. Service users take more drugs in high doses and this reduces their chances of quitting the habit.

Substance abuse also exacerbates gender based violence and femicide across ages, in urban and rural areas, across all communities, genders and social status. This is simply a clarion call to all of us. No time for bystanders.

The National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NSP GBVF), as a cohesive policy response by the government and people of South Africa to end this scourge, calls on all living in South Africa to be accountable, prevent and respond to GBVF. So we should all play a role in curbing gender based violence and its contributing factors in all our settings.

Petrus Siko
Editors-in-Chief

FROM MEC'S DESK



Revolutionary greetings to all the readers of The Bulletin publication. It is a great honour and privilege for me to meet with you over this publication. This is one of the vehicles that we use to communicate the messages and programmes of the department to the citizenry of the North West province. Dear readers, we are faced with yet another pandemic that we dare not to live with it: Substance abuse.

A week after my appointment, as a Member of the Executive Council responsible for the Department of Social Development, I visited a group of young people who smoke various drugs at a Bradford taxi rank in the capital Mahikeng. As I engage them, they indicated to me that they have nothing to do, that is why they spend most of their time on drugs.

It is heart-wrenching that most persons with drug use disorders are graduates from tertiary institutions and have decided to indulge in various substances because of unemployment and other personal problems. This is dire situation that calls for the attention of all of us to work together to eradicate abuse of drugs and substances that continue to rob the future of our children. Prevention, treatment and law enforcement authorities are crucial to reducing the sale of substances in our communities.

According to the report released by South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use released in 2021, North West is among the three provinces in our country (Free State and Northern Cape) where alcohol was the most common primary substance of use, accounting for 39% of all admissions in respective treatment centres.

Among the 189 persons treated at three centres during this period, cannabis was the second most common primary substance of use at 36%, followed by methamphetamine at 12%. Nyaope is gaining popularity among adolescents, with far-reaching effects on users, families, and communities.

Another survey conducted by South African National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS) found that 15% of pupils admitted to using over-the-counter drugs to get high. The same study found that 11.5% of pupils had tried at least one drug, such as heroin, Mandrax, sugars or Tik.

It has never become easy to address drug abuse without professional assistance. To this end we have budgeted R4.2 million to enable NPOs to provide substance abuse prevention services and aftercare to persons with substance use disorders.

Furthermore, our plans for this year is to establish Local Drug Action Committees in all local municipalities for coordination and intensification of substance abuse prevention programmes which includes Siyalulama Community Outreach Programme, Festive Season Campaign and Debates on Substance Abuse in some schools.

We have also made remarkable strides towards rehabilitating those that are addicted to drugs. With the commitment of many role players which include faith based organisations, parents, the private sector and the media, effective prevention, treatment, and control of drug-related problems could become a reality in the province and the country at large.

Lazarus Mokgosi
MEC for Social Development

ON THE COVER: From left North West MECs for Health Madoda Sambatha, Arts Culture Sports and Recreation Kenetswe Mosenogi and Social Development Lazarus Mokgosi dance to Sangala song with the elderly at the Maquassi Hills golden games held at Wolmaranstad, as part of the Thuntsha Lerole accelerated service delivery in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District.

RURAL WOMEN DARE TO SHAKE THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

By Obusitšwe T. Kebonèilwe



Gents and Debs representatives showcase their clothing apparel during Thuntsha lerole service delivery campaign at Bokfontein while MEC Lazarus Mokgosi and officials look on

The ever-rising school uniform prices against the devastating poverty of Mmakau village near Brits, propelled a group of women to put their skills into use to mitigate against the struggles of the community.

It all started in 2012, when this group formed Gents and Debs Clothing and Linen co-operative, which continue to change the lives of many in Mmakau. The schools around the village rely on their sewing to produce uniform, which includes caps, jerseys and socks. The quality of their material set them apart from others, because their uniform is durable. Other than these products, they manufacture clothing and linen for hospitals and service clubs. Besides sewing, the cooperative trains the youth so that they can be financially independent.

Explaining the logic of empowering others, while the market is saturated, the co-operative chairperson, Deborah Tshabangu said they are driven by community development over money. “We cannot sit and watch, being selfish while we can make a difference in somebody’s life” The little we get must be shared among us to enhance the lifestyle of our area. Tshabangu’s sentiments were shared by another member, Christina Khondowe, who said they are driven by passion to see an equal society.

“We often give clothes to needy families and school uniforms as part of our social responsibility” said Khondowe.

Their selfless attitude should not fool you into thinking they do not harbour any dreams.

“It is time for women to be shakers in the market,” says Khondowe, adding that their vision is to be big players in the textile industry. “We are setting our stall to make clothes, embroidery, digitising and starting some fabrics from the scratch. To be sustainable, we need to be patient and study the intricacies of the market,” said Tshabangu.

For two financial years in a row, Gents and Debs had received financial boost from the North West Department of Social Development to enable them to buy sewing machines and a car.

“This income generating cooperative is now in the right stead to be linked with economic opportunities. The provision of material support to rural women across the province, is in line with the departmental policy on economic strengthening of individuals, households and community initiatives with aim to reduce vulnerability, poverty and dependence on the state,” newly appointed MEC for Social Development Lazarus Mokgosi said during the second leg of Thuntsha lerole accelerated service delivery campaign at Bokfontein in Madibeng. Mokgosi said women cooperatives should receive material support from government if they are to become sustainable.

FINANCIAL BOOST TO THE ELDERLY'S FACILITY

By Petrus Siko



Wolmaranstad home for the aged manager Brand Pretorius receives a cheque worth R 3 million from MEC Mokgosi

In a move to support frail and semi-frail elderly people, North West MEC for Social Development Lazarus Mokgosi gave a much needed financial injection amounting to R3m to a Wolmaranstad based home for the aged to enable it to continue to offer residential and therapeutic care to the elderly in the area. Wolmaranstad Tehuis vir Bejaardes as they call it in Afrikaans, was established in 1979 to provide residential care to elderly people who are 60 and above, have limitations in self-care capacity and require continuous care and therapeutic services. Currently the facility has accommodated 92 older persons from Maquassie Hills and neighbouring areas in Dr Kenneth Kaunda district.

During the Thuntsha lerole accelerated service delivery campaign in Dr Kenneth Kaunda district, Mokgosi led MEC's for Health and Arts Culture Sports and Recreation Madoda Sambatha and Kenetswe Mosenogi, and the local councilors to Makwassi sport ground and donated a symbolic cheque to Wolmaranstad Tehuis vir Bejaardes. At the time, elderly people from Tsweleng, Makwassi and other areas within the jurisdiction of Maquassi Hills local municipality gathered at the local sport ground for their annual golden games.

"Our appeal is that NPOs should use government money for its intended purpose. We call on the management of this Wolmaranstad home for the aged to do like wise and use this money subject to relevant legislation and make sure that they comply with the NPO Act," Mokgosi said.

Since the Thuntsa lerole started in July, Mokgosi has already donated symbolic cheques to registered NPOs in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati, Bojanala and Dr Kenneth Kaunda districts.

Mokgosi who has vast experience in the public service, said the masses of people need services more than ever before especially post Covid-19 pandemic which affected many sectors of the society. He said his department is determined to implement meticulous service delivery plans at a brisker pace to address the challenges that communities face.

Wolmaranstad home for the aged manager, Brand Pretorius described the authorities gesture as a surprise and honour to his organisation. Pretorius said they have received financial assistance from the Department of Social Development over the years of his reign. "What is more humbling is that the symbolic cheque is being handed over to us by the MECs. We feel so honoured and will make sure we use this money carefully and make sure that it benefits the right people," Pretorius said, adding that his organisation depends squarely on social development for funding and other means such as fundraising and marketing of their services to potential donors.

PROCESS OF REGISTERING RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

By James Moche

Opening and old age home is a good idea but it is not easy if one wants to cut corners. Government introduced an Older Persons Act 13 of 2006 to deal effectively with the plight of older persons by establishing a framework aimed at among others, empowering and protecting older persons.

Chapter 4 of the Act provides for the establishment of older persons' facilities. Department of Social Development is mandated to register such facilities annually. Key stakeholders are compelled by law to play specific roles and provide documents such as social work report by the Department of Social Development, medicine and chronic diseases report by the Department of Health and inspection report by the Department of Public Works and Roads.

Older persons in facilities enjoy several rights such as access to basic care, participation in social, religious and community activities of their own choice, privacy, own physician, 30 days' notice of a proposed transfer from the facility,

No person is allowed to operate a residential facility unless registered under section 18. A person wishing to operate such a facility, must in a prescribed manner, apply to the Minister of Social Development. A social worker or person designated by the Director General of Social Development, must visit the facility before registration, check compliance with norms and standards, and submit a report to the Director General. The Minister may refuse or grant the application, subject

to conditions he/she may determine.

The registration certificate should specify conditions issued to the application. Such conditions should not exceed 12 months. A registration certificate may not be transferred to another person. The Minister may after a period specified amend or cancel a certificate.

In an event the facility operator wishes to close the facility, the operator must do certain things prior to stopping the service. They include consulting the Minister, give notice of intention to close, provide full report on accommodation of older persons, hand over all assets bought with government funds and transfer facility residents to another facility.

The Older Persons Act 13 of 2006 provides for many government departments to play specific roles in the welfare of older persons. They are departments of health, public works and roads, cooperative governance and traditional affairs, social development.

Persons applying for registration of residential facilities are expected to submit the application form, a business plan, house rules, list of older persons under the person's care, levels of care offered, certificate of the health inspector and health report, proof that the residential facility complies with national or local building regulations, report of the Department of Social Development, permanent registration certificate and temporary registration.

HOPE FOR CHILD OFFENDERS

By James Moche

The uncertain future of children in conflict with the law in the North West, will soon be bright after the department of social development commenced a process of expunging 19 diversion and criminal records of child offenders who meet a criterion outlined by the law. The process is done in conjunction with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and the South African Police Service.

Expungement is a procedure which results in the lawful clearance and removal of a criminal record on an individual's record from the National Criminal Register. The offences include theft, assault, assault with intent to cause bodily harm, house breaking and sexual offences.

This process is provided for by the Child Justice Amendment Act, 28 of 2019. Section 87 of the Act provides for the criteria used to expunge criminal and diversion records. Expungement can only happen once an offender has reached the age of 21. The initiation of such a process, is done by the Department of Social Development on behalf of the affected children.

The records are expunged only after the lapse of a five-year period from the conviction date.

The cases that are subject of expungement, were part of 1227 children who were criminally charged for various offences, and their cases were diverted, and child justice courts referred them to the Departments of Social Development to implement accredited diversion programmes.

The names of children referred by the child justice courts for diversion services, are kept on the national diversion register. When they turn 21, they become eligible to be considered for the expungement, unless the child has been convicted of any other offence before that date or has failed to comply with the diversion programmes. The department is expected to verify, quality assure and confirm, where applicable, that the diversion orders have been complied with.

Deputy Director for Probation Services in the North West Watson Seattle says the expungement process, gives its beneficiaries an opportunity for their records to be removed permanently, and so that they can continue with their lives without having a burden of a record. He says it is also a chance for them to learn from their childhood mistakes.

Seattle dispelled the perception in some quarters, that the diversion process equals to government treating child offenders lightly. He says imprisonment is not necessarily an appropriate punishment in all cases. Seattle further said the application of the expungement process, is limited in nature. It does not cater for re-offenders.

The collaborative relationship between the Departments of Social Development, Justice and Constitutional Development and the South African Police Service needs to be appreciated because without it, the expungement process would not have worked. From 2010 to 2023, more than 100 000 court diversion referrals have been recorded nationally. These referrals will in the future be considered for expungement.

THUMPS UP FOR ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

By James Moche



Social Development officials Eucliff Tsunke and Londiwe Maphumolo share a light moment after sign language was adopted as an official language

Key social sector stakeholders in the North West, have welcomed the signing into law of sign language, as South Africa's twelfth official language. This was done by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

Before the signing into law of the Sign Language Bill into law, the country had 11 official languages. They are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu. For many centuries South Africa's official languages were European. This changed in 1994, when the country was liberated from Apartheid.

The National Assembly approved the amendment of Section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, to include the sign language, as an official language to promote the rights of persons who are deaf and hard hearing.

The Presidency says the recognition of sign language as an official language, is a signal towards the realization of the rights of people who are deaf or hard hearing. This development means South Africa now becomes the fourth country in Africa to endorse sign language as an official language. The others are Uganda, Kenya, and Zimbabwe.

North West Department of Social Development's Deputy Director for Services to Persons with Disabilities, Desiree Cindi described the recognition of the language is a great achievement for South Africa because it will address the question of the exclusion of deaf or hard hearing people.

She says it is a great advantage for such people particularly when it comes to service delivery.

"It also means all of us need to learn sign language so that we improve the way we communicate with deaf people or those who are hard hearing. We are thankful to the South African government for recognizing sign language as an official language", says Cindi.

A Senior Administration Officer in the Director Special Needs' office, Eucliff Tsunke, who is also a deaf person, says it means now deaf people have the same equal rights to access service delivery like the rest of the people. He says it is exciting that the sign language is recognized, adding that it provides equal opportunities all citizens, including deaf people.

"The biggest struggle has been communication between us and other people. It meant people who had a service to provide to deaf people had a challenge communicating with their clients. Although government services were open to everyone, deaf people struggle in this regard because of the language barrier, say Tsunke.

He says because of the previous exclusion, some deaf people felt they were not part of a democratic South Africa. Tsunke says in such instances, deaf people lost their lives because services could not reach them.

"We need to engage the human resources division to provide basic training on sign language. The addition of sign language as an official language, is not only meant for deaf people, but for parents with deaf children.

SURVIVOR TELLS A TALE

By Petrus Siko



Restoring youth dignity manager Genrose Mndaweni pictured in her office narrating her ordeal to The Bulletin editor

As a sombre mood reigned in her office as she detailed her harrowing experience that led to her being on the wrong side of the law. Painful memories revisited her. Every now and then she composed herself as she made a recollection of gender based violence incidents that happened to her.

One Saturday, violence erupted in her house at the infamous unit 6 suburbia in the capital Mahikeng. Her abusive husband was on her case. She made payments for household bills and the insurance. She also made monthly instalment of their vehicle. The abuser took the keys of the vehicle and told me it was his car, and she had to hike to work. She received a subsidised vehicle from government and refused to make the car repayments of the vehicle and the household insurance any more. She was then thrown out of the house at the infamous suburbia at unit 6 in Mahikeng. With no shoes on her feet Genrose Mndaweni, a mother of two, grabbed her handbag and fled for her life.

Violence was common in Mndaweni's house. One day he got a job opportunity in Namibia. Her wife congratulated him and wished him well. She could see that he was not happy with the response. Seeing that this was leading to trouble Mndaweni pleaded with him to discuss the matter when he was in a good state of mind because this was a big step to take.

"My youngest child and I left and he followed us. I started the car and he said we must go back to house and I refused. Whilst I was reversing the car, he threw a big stone on my windscreen and he ran to the passenger door and smashed the window. My son screamed and he continued throwing stones at us.

I drove away from the house. Within the distance of five kilometres I stopped to check the child and discovered that he suffered lacerations on the ear as a result of bleeding. I rushed him to the hospital. She was attended to, quickly and the doctor completed a J88 and advised me to open a case against him.

I left for the police station where I opened the case. I was advised of the court date and I attended. She was denied justice. As they entered the court, female magistrate dismissed the case without asking or saying anything. Mndaweni was devastated and ran to talk to the prosecutor without success. The prosecutor she said they gave her a wrong file and that she should forget about the case. It is was thrown out of the court.

"I asked: is this how the system works? Are children not protected? My husband was standing not far from me laughing and showing me the middle figure. I followed the law enforcement route many a times without success. I did not get any solution. No arrest was made. No protection orders were issued to the perpetrator.

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"In haste she looked for a shelter at an informal settlement around Mahikeng. There she used a prima stove to boil water to bathe and cook. They had a peace of mind. Her husband eventually traced and found her and threatened the owner of the property to throw them out. We ended up staying in my subsidised car parked at the garage in Mahikeng for a period of time." The petrol attendants made sure we were safe. In the morning we would look for a place to freshen up and ask for boiling water to prepare instant porridge for my son before I took him to school and proceeded to my workplace.

After what happened to my child, I knew that it was a matter of life and death. In one instance, I reversed my vehicle into the neighbours pool after fleeing from him while trying to attack me with a sword, after crashing my vehicle into a tree on a separate occasions and the moment he threatened me with a firearm in front of his new lover, and law enforcement got involved in each incident and no solution was offered. My mental state in itself had suffered as well, I couldn't cope with the pain, humiliation and I had built up a lot of anger. I became an angry individual, extremely angry. It was either him or me to end it all.

Necessity knows no choice. I decided that I was not going to be myself. On the 17 July 1995 Cedric Mndaweni was no more. Her abusive relationship landed her in prison for killing her husband. Mndaweni now 70, was found guilty and sentenced to 25 years for his murder and spent a total of 11 years in incarceration.

During this period, Mndaweni missed her two sons very dearly. She missed their matric dances, birthdays and those of her grandchildren and so many other momentous occasions that any parent could look forward to celebrate with their children. But looking at them today and how they have managed to grow themselves against the odds.

The four walls of the prison cell could not cripple her inner person. It provided her with the opportunity to do some introspection. She decided to forgive her abuser and forgive herself for all that had happened. I finally let go of the anger that had consumed me. My mental state became normal again.

While serving her sentence, Mndaweni regained her passion to serve. She served as a member of the recreational committee, and a cell representative would present speeches on behalf of inmates during events. She used to serve as a coordinator of 67 minutes of selfless service which involved knitting 67 blankets that were donated to the needy. She was a teacher for life orientation, travel and tourism, business economics and IsiZulu. "Some officials from the department of social development knew my abusive marriage. They gave me the necessary support. They used to visit me in prison."

Two years before her release, Mndaweni requested her eldest son to register an NPO whose sole mission was to address matters related to substance abuse, family deterioration and abuse of women and children.

"I realized that there has to be intervention strategies in order to flatten the curve of this pandemic and various intervention strategies are applicable at either stage of the curve. It is exactly why Restoring Youth Dignity was born, to flatten the curve of this pandemic by educating our youth of the impact of substance abuse and maintaining vigilance at the love stage, minimizing the effects of the escalation stages, lowering the peak and ultimately limiting the impacts of the decent and heighten the effect of the rebirth." Her bitter experience motivated others to greatness. She undertook moral regeneration sessions to local schools in Matlosana. Currently Mndaweni is the founder and director of Restoring youth dignity organisation.

Since its 15 years of existence Restoring youth dignity has impacted and changed the lives of thousands of learners, youth, families and communities in Dr Kenneth Kaunda district. Through their financial acumen, the organisation managed to spread its wings by establishing its own community office and satellite centres operating in Klerksdorp, Jouberton, Alabama, Orkney, Kanana, Tigane, Khuma and the surrounding communities. The department of social development in the North West has provided funding to Restoring youth dignity organisation to render family and substance abuse services to community members in the district.

Restoring youth dignity organisation exists to resolve problems associated with substance abuse, reduce violence directed towards women, young girls, families and the broader community, empower parents on parenting skills, build self-esteem and leadership skills among community members and they offer many more programmes that are beneficial to the youth.

"Our actions are not without challenges and therefore I would like to extend my appreciation and gratitude to my team who are the life blood of our organisation. They wake up everyday with a renewed commitment to serve our communities. We thank both the public and private sector for giving us the necessary support. Much appreciation would also go to our communities for allowing us into their homes and for trusting us to serve them in their time of need," Mndaweni said calling for both men and women to rid themselves of the negative relationships that consume them, forgive those that hurt them, harbor no anger but most of all, strive for greatness at all times.

SOCIAL GRANTS

Are you employed and need a social grant, let's do a means test.



South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) has noted with concern that there are people who are employed especially in the sectors such as retails, EPWPs or even those receiving pension from GEPP, who could qualify for a grant but they might not be aware.

There are different types of social grants offered by the agency, however, there are requirements that one is expected to meet in order to be legible to receive them. It does not necessarily mean that if one is working automatically do not qualify for a grant. A means test has to be conducted.

When conducting a means test, SASSA takes into consideration applicant's income and asset threshold as stated in the social assistance act of 2004. The set eligible criteria is taken into consideration in order to ensure that financial aid is provided to those who do not have the means to support themselves and their families.

Applicants who are married will have their applications assessed together with their spouses' combined income. Income will be combined regardless of whether applicants are married in community of property or out of community of property. If married, an income/pay slip of both partners will be required.

Income threshold criteria differs from one grant type to another.

Maximum income threshold for each type of SASSA grant as of 01 April 2023:

Covid-19 SRD grant: The applicant must NOT earn more than R624 per month

Child support grant: The applicant (the primary caregiver of the child you are applying for) must NOT earn more than:

- R60 000 per year (R5 000 per month) if you are single
- R120 000 per year (R10 000 per month) if you are married

Foster child grant: there is no income/ asset/ means test applicable for this type of grant

Care Dependency grant: The applicant (primary caregiver of the child you are applying for) must NOT earn more than:

- R249 600 per year (R20 800 per month) if you are single
- R499 200 per year (R41 600 per month) if you are married

Disability grant: you must NOT earn more than:

- R96 840 per year (R8 070 per month) if you are single
- R193 680 per year (R16 140 per month) if you are married

Older persons grant: you must NOT earn more than:

- R96 840 per year (R8 070 per month) if you are single
- R193 680 per year (R16 140 per month) if you are married

Grant-in-Aid: you must NOT earn more than:

- R96 840 per year (R8 070 per month) if you are single
- R193 680 per year (R16 140 per month) if you are married

Clients are encouraged to visit SASSA local offices for a means test to be done to confirm if they qualify or not. Applicants can also use the online platform to apply for Old Age, Child Support grants by visiting www.sassa.gov.za. They can do this at the comfort of their own home without physical visit to the local office.

More information, contact SASSA on: toll free 0800 601011 or 018 397 3360/ 3333/ 3346/ 3301 or www.sassa.gov.za

GOVERNMENT HELPS YOUNG WOMEN TO NAIL IT IN THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY

By Obusitšwe T. Kebonèilwe



Emerging young women in Mahikeng receive a cheque from government to run their businesses.

The provincial government has given three young women starter packages worth R20 000 each to grow and establish their businesses in the ever-growing cosmetic and beauty industry. The young women from villages around the capital Mahikeng have been ready to operate, but just needed a financial nudge to realise their dreams. “We have been through courses on business start-ups from department of economic development, environment, conservation and tourism and have been waiting for this opportunity”, said the elated Lesedi Motlhageng from Masuthe 2.

“I applied late last year when I first heard that government can give us assistance as a springboard to launch our businesses”. My portfolio in this cut-throat beauty industry entails nails technician, hairdressing and

makeup artist, continues Motlhageng. “I currently do not have a place where I run my business, therefore I rely on house calls or going to clients as far as Mahikeng.

“With the money I got from government, I intend to expand my business while nurturing other young women to grow in this industry. “My long term goal is to have an academy where I will teach those willing to learn, though I realise the downside of it might be an increased competition for the clients,” laughs 26-years old Motlhageng.

MEC for Social Development, Lazarus Mokgosi said many wonderful dreams die because some brilliant minds do not get financial help from the financial institutions. “It is a tricky situation,” Mokgosi notes, adding that government hopes that the beneficiaries will not let us down. “There has been many pockets of success in giving young women a start to establish their businesses. I hope by the end of this financial year, there will be good testimony from these young ladies. This affords them a good chance to take part in the local economy”.

“Our involvement with these young women does not end here. We will link them with the department of economic development, environment, conservation and tourism, where they will receive guidance on how to successfully run their businesses, said Mokgosi. “This gesture is in line with the departmental policy on economic strengthening of individuals, households and communities to reduce dependence on the state”.

FIGHTING MALNUTRITION IN OUR IMPOVERISHED COMMUNITIES

By Obusitšwe T. Kebonèilwe

Asum of about Eight Hundred and Seventy Thousands to Itekeng community nutrition and development centre (CNDC) was perfectly timed to mark the end of nutrition awareness week, which has encouraged the communities to strive for balanced nutrients in the plate. The Swartruggens based centre plays a crucial role in ensuring that the community members receive a nutrition-balanced plate during weekdays. Malnutrition and stunting have haunted a large slice of the community for many years. Making nutritious food in the form of cooked meal accessible to the poor goes a long way in improving the quality of life of the citizens.

Handing over the cheque at Bojanala-Platinum District Thuntsha Lerole campaign, MEC for Social Development, Lazarus Mokgosi says the centre has, “extended the work of government in helping the less fortunate and vulnerable people”. Mokgosi cautioned

against the complacency that often creeps in after government has helped beneficiaries with funds.

“We give you this public purse to continue on the impressive path that is evident to everyone to see. Let this money not start non-existing conflicts. You are a government at work, therefore be prudent and accountable with these funds”. MEC Mokgosi visited other households facing starvation and undue hardships in Borolelo settlement to provide food parcels. One of the beneficiaries, Letlhogonolo Seolwane was left stunned by the gesture.

“I stay with my siblings who are still at school and I did not know what our supper will be. This is a pleasant surprise by government, which I hugely appreciate. I will ensure that the food parcels carries us through the month”.

UNDYING FATHERLY LOVE LEADS SOBER DECISION



Deputy Minister of Social Development Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu addresses young people at the launch of 9-9-9 alcohol syndrome in Matlosana.

He could pass off as a teenager, but Thabang Mokgara of Vryburg is a 24-year-old father to a daughter, whose future inspired him to seek road to rehabilitation and beat drug addiction.

Mokgara and many more are shining examples of JB Marks Treatment centre in Potchefstroom that has rehabilitated many who were addicted to substances. “It started with smoking dagga”, recalls Mokgara. One day I asked my friend for my regular puff, unbeknown to me he had laced the joint with nyaope. It gave me an inexplicable sense, which I wanted more of, not knowing it is a road to disaster. “The moment I went back to just dagga, I had stomach cramps, which were part of withdrawal signs.

Deputy Minister for Social Development, Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu says people misconstrue what overdose is. Overdose is everything and anything that the body cannot process. “My overdose is unlikely to be yours because our bodies are not the same. “We are a bunch of overdosers but because we stay in fancied houses and behind the desktops, we hide our façade by projecting it to those in the streets. “Waking up to a headache pill or a mug of coffee shows you are addicted”, said Bogopane-Zulu while the world was marking Overdose Awareness day in Potchefstroom. “We must all be mindful of how we consume drugs, be it prescriptive or over the counter”.

For Mokgara, who is fully aware that he is one incident to relapse, a mirror technique keeps him going, as he often ask himself, “Do I want to lose myself to the same spot?”

UNDER AGE DRINKING POSES DANGER TO YOUR FUTURE CHILD



It can take about 10 years for alcohol to flush out of your body system, if it is consumed while the drinker is under the legalized age of 18 years or older, putting the chances of foetal alcohol syndrome disorder to 90%.

In the yearly 9-9-9 campaign, which was kickstarted in Alabama near Klerksdorp by national deputy minister for Social Development, Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu, it was further revealed that even the semen of men can cause foetal alcohol syndrome disorder (FASD). According to Bogopane-Zulu FASD is a leading source of non-genetic developmental and intellectual disability globally. “The sad state of affairs is that World Health Organisation (WHO) fingers South Africa as having the highest reported prevalence of FASD in the world”.

“Currently, Bogopane-Zulu continues, “FSAD is 100% preventable, but unfortunately it cannot be reversed”. I therefore call all civil and progressive members of the society to join us in spreading the message on the effects of FSAD”. Tavern owners please desist from selling alcohol to pregnant ladies and the underage. The same plea goes to friends of expectant mothers, who are the ones sent to purchase alcohol, when tavern owners chase away the pregnant ladies.

The community at Alabama learnt with a great shock that the first thing a child born with FASD needs is a syringe of alcohol. This means that the child is born drunk, which means this cycle of FASD will be tough to break.

Bogopane-Zulu led the 9-9-9 campaign, which succinctly means nine consecutive days of the ninth month across nine provinces. The minister rang an alarm at nine minutes past nine at each of foetal alcohol syndrome disorder campings.

WE CANNOT REMAIN SILENT ANY LONGER

By Obusitšwe T. Kebonèilwe



MEC Mokgosi and police officers visited the family of the victim of GBV at Reivilo in Taung as part of the launch of the 16 days of activism for no violence against women and children.

Despite the plummeting temperatures, it was a typical Saturday night for Botlenyana Matsebula* and her children. Huddled together in her new two-ply mink blanket, she savoured her new freedom as she prepared to go to a warm bed.

Little did she know that the following morning, she will be rescued from a near death in a shallow grave with broken ribs, limbs, jaws, bloodied nose and torn pyjamas.

Her thoughts for a warm bed were abrupt by a door that flung open, the door handle hitting the floor and spinning like a cut-off tail of a lizard trying to confuse its pursuer. Before she could gather what was going on, the calamine on her cheeks was wiped off by a series of open palm slaps. “Hey wena, jou ...” profanities followed concomitant with fists from her former live-in lover. Her crime was ending and walking away from an abusive relationship.

The story of Matsebula is not new. It is no longer even shocking. It is the story of our lives; an obdurate stain that government has vowed to fight with all its might. “Gender-based violence (GBV) has no place in our society,” MEC for Social Development, Lazarus Mokgosi asserts when the province launched 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign in Reivilo, Greater Taung.

Government must fight GBV in the same manner they used on Covid 19 pandemic. GBV is not abetting despite the effort, time and resources we have put to arrest its rise. This year we mark the 25th anniversary since South Africa initiated the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children campaign. “We should be telling a different story, but unfortunately we are not. We however remain resolute; no matter what, we will defeat the scourge of GBV. Women and children

shall roam the streets freely to enjoy the full freedom that was won through our blood and tears.

Mokgosi appeals for boys to be involved in societal activities. “Neglecting young boys in the activities that make them feel appreciated results in this chain of abuse remaining intact”. We must nurture their young minds to know that they must protect their siblings, family and not be feared monsters at home. “It is at home where gender-based violence is allowed to thrive”, adds Mokgosi. “Mostly we remain silent and relegate the abuse as problems of the affected family. Not only do we maintain silence at home but also in the public space. “We tolerate cultural and religious undertones that oppress women and children.

Despite the growing rate of gender-based violence, North West government is making strides at eating away at the harrowing statistics. At the only state-run centre that caters for abused women and children, Khuseleka based in Vryburg, many women have emerged stronger. One of them is Martha Melato, a 39-year old mother of two from Sannieshof. “I was almost a zombie when I got to the centre”, recalls Melato who was a guest of honour at the provincial launch. “I was beaten daily by my husband for four years, non-stop”, she says pointing at scars on her face. “I was about to lose my mind, but through the intense counselling I got at the centre, my confidence has come back. The centre has given me skills on sewing and computer programmes, which will come in handy when I get back home.

Tshenolo Kemosedile, 32 from Huhudi in Vryburg says it took counselling at Khuseleka for the penny to drop what she saw as a loving relationship, was but a subtle abuse under the guise of romance. “My boyfriend of seven years abused me emotionally”. He disapproved of my way of dressing and cooking. He made assumptions that I am a loose girl because originally I am from a township and he was from a village. “What I saw as attention, was a mere obsession with the sole aim of controlling my movements. My self-esteem took an ebb. I lost so much weight from his abuse that even my waist could not hold the underwear, something that amused him to no ends.

Today, Matsebula who is a shade of her former self, receives treatment for her injuries. She used to have spring in her step, but at the hands of an abusive and possessive lover, she now dawdles with the gait of a clumsy child at a hopscotch. She could not even hold her crutch properly. Her speech is blurred.

MEC Mokgosi has vowed to make Matsebula's case a top priority. The least we could do is for this young lady and her family to get justice. We hope the courts will mete out a sentence that will deter others from raising a hand against a woman. Those who hurt the most vulnerable in society must have no place to hide, Mokgosi said.

STATE FUNDING BENEFITS VULNERABLE CHILDREN

By Petrus Siko



Utlwanang Council of Churches receives financial boost from MEC Mokgosi to continue their excellent service delivery towards the vulnerable.

Orphans and vulnerable children at Utlwanang township near Christiana stand to benefit from a year long funding from the Department of Social Development in the North West province. During the second leg of the provincial government's accelerated service delivery programme, Thuntsha lerole in the area, social development MEC Lazarus Mokgosi handed over a symbolic cheque worth R952 324 000 to Utlwanang council of churches representatives to enable them to continue to provide services to vulnerable children, older persons and persons with disabilities in the area.

Receiving the symbolic cheque, Utlwanang council of churches project manager Obakeng Thomas hailed the state for providing their organisation with funding nine times in a row, citing that the financial boost will enable them to provide psychosocial support to the vulnerable children.

"We are grateful to the state for providing us with funding. We are so humbled by this gesture and promise to use it in a transparent, efficient and effective manner for the benefit of the needy among our communities." Thomas said, adding that they will continue to provide support to HIV/AIDS infected and affected families and individuals at Kanana, Kgwapapa, Ikageleng, Sonderwater, Greenfield, Geluksoord Extensions, Monoto and Ngape.

Thomas said Utlwanang council of churches was established by leaders of various churches amidst the high rise of HIV infections in the area which contributed to a number of orphans and vulnerable children. Unemployment, Thomas said is also rife in the area forcing most residents to depend squarely on social grants and odd jobs from the neighbouring farms.

Mokgosi whose department provides funding to most NPOs in the social sector cautioned the council of churches to use government funding for its intended purpose. "NPOs are strategically located within our communities to provide much needed services to the most vulnerable and they serve as an extended arm of government. As such we trust them with government money and we urge them to submit financial reports to the department," Mokgosi said.

Since Thuntsha lerole service delivery programme was launched in Mamusa in July this year, Mokgosi has been handing over cheques to more than ten NPOs including women owned SMMEs across the province. He has also provided social relief of distress in the form of food parcels to poverty stricken families.



16 DAYS

of **Activism** for **No Violence** against
Women and Children 2023

— 25 November-10 December —

It is our collective responsibility to create safer communities free from gender-based violence. Play your part, report GBVF to your nearest police station.

Contact:

GBV Command Centre Emergency Number: 0800 428 428
SMS "help" to 31531, SAPS: 10111

ACCELERATING ACTIONS TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE & FEMICIDE (GBVF)



social development

Department:
Social Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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**THE NDP SETS OUT A VISION FOR SOUTH AFRICA FOR 2030.
IT AIMS TO ELIMINATE POVERTY, AND REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT
AND INEQUALITY BY 2030**



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**FOURTH FLOOR, PROVIDENT HOUSE
UNIVERSITY DRIVE
MMABATHO
2735**

**P/BAG X6
MMABATHO
2735**

TEL NO.: 018 388 1426/2476

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