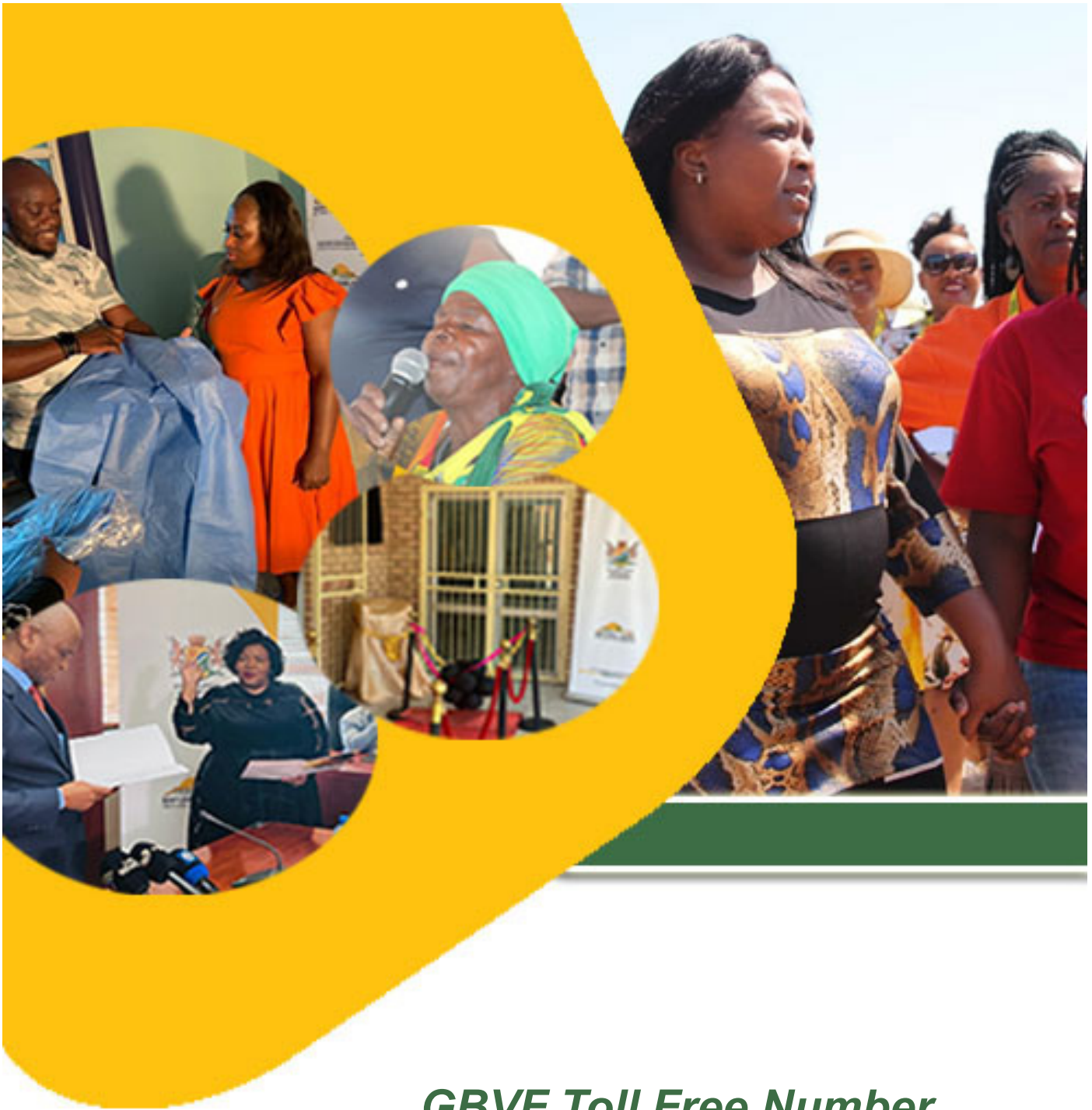


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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL'S SERVICE DELIVERY IMBIZO INVADES DR JS MOROKA MUNICIPALITY



A local resident defining the acute water challenge in Dr JS Moroka Municipality

The Executive Council's three day Outreach and Imbizo programme descended in Dr JS Moroka Municipality to address service delivery challenges. The public participation programme afforded the citizens and community structures an opportunity to engage the Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane and MECs regarding service delivery challenges and for the Executive Council to inform them about intervention measures.

Although the acute shortage of water is ranked high among the service delivery challenges, however, the Executive Council also attended to a myriad of challenges raised by communities during an Imbizo at Senotlelo village. These include the high rate of unemployment, inadequate capacity of health facilities, dilapidated schools and road infrastructure. Members of the Executive Council visited projects for monitoring and evaluation and conducted stakeholder engagements in various villages, to formulate intervention measures.

A commitment to resolve the water challenge within 18 months, was the highlight of the pro-

gramme. Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane told the community that the construction of the Mkhombo dam is the solution for the water challenge. "Only 11ML of water per day, are abstracted from the Loskop dam, and distributed to both the Dr JS Moroka and Thembisile Hani Municipalities. The construction of the Mkhombo dam is at 97 percent towards completion. It will take about 18 months to complete. Through the dam, we will provide water adequately," the Premier stated.

Vandalism of electrical cables at the Siyabuswa Water Treatment Plant, old infrastructure and the drought were identified as contributory factors for the water shortage. The municipality provides water to the affected villages through water tankers, as an interim measure. Mtshweni-Tsipane urged the community to report cases of vandalism to the police. "The protection of the water facility is not the responsibility of the government alone, but yours too. Failure to take action against the saboteurs, proliferates this crime," she emphasized.

Despite the water challenge and the commitment to resolve it, the EXCO outreach programme inspired hope to the community. These include the construction of 39 housing units and hand over in November 2022 at Seabe village, the support for youth empowerment through the Mpumalanga Youth Development Fund (MYDF), development of a strategy to revitalize the AGRIHUB at Madubaduba, the renovation plan of the Tirisang victim centre and a roadshow of SMMEs for local business support.

PREMIER MTSHWENI-TSIPANE MAKES CHANGES TO THE PROVINCIAL CABINET



MEC Msibi and Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane in a jovial mood.

Mpumalanga Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane has made changes to the Provincial Cabinet. These changes include the appointment of two (2) new MECs as the Provincial Government accelerate plans to re-ignite the economy in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and to address infrastructure challenges and backlogs.

The appointment of Ms Nompumelelo Hlophe as MEC for the Department of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism (DED&T) and Mr Mandla Msibi as MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), gives credence to Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane's aspirations. Both are experienced in the public service, after a stint both

in the Local and Provincial Government spheres. Until recently, MEC Hlophe was Chairperson of a Legislature Committee and MEC Msibi was responsible for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARD-LEA).

Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane expressed confidence in the leadership abilities of both, to provide the much-needed leadership, and steer the relevant Departments towards the realization of their mandates. "I have no doubt that MEC Msibi will put more impetus in our efforts as government to help municipalities deliver on their service delivery mandate", the Premier stated. She referenced the appointment of MEC Nompumelelo Evidence Hlophe to the efforts of bringing in new and fresh thinking in government.

Mr Mandla Ndlovu replaces former MEC Mohita Latchminarain as MEC for the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport (PWR&T), while MEC Hlophe replaces former MEC Vusi Mkhathshwa.

The full list of MECs:

- The appointment of **Nompumelelo Hlophe**.
- The appointment of **Mandla Msibi**.
- The appointment of **Mandla Ndlovu**.
- The appointment of **Sesekani Manzini**.
- The appointment of **Lindiwe Ntshalintshali**.
- The appointment of **Vusi Shongwe**.
- The appointment of **Speed Mashilo**.
- The appointment of **Bonakele Majuba**.
- The appointment of **Busi Shiba**.
- The appointment of **Thandi Shongwe**.



Newly appointed MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Ms Nompumelelo Hlophe.

MORE THAN R81 MILLION PAID TO SUPPORT YOUTH ENTERPRISES IN MPUMALANGA



Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane toured Lungile Mkhize's poultry far in Siyabuswa for monitoring. Mkhize is among the beneficiaries of the MYDF

The disbursement of funds to support youth enterprises in Mpumalanga is at an advanced stage. The Mpumalanga Provincial Government established the Mpumalanga Youth Development Fund (MYDF) as one of the measures to confront youth unemployment. The MYDF is a three (3) year pilot project, aimed at supporting job creation initiatives and enterprise development by the youth.

In the 2021-22 financial year, Mpumalanga Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane announced a R90 million allocation for the realization of the youth employment aspirations. By end of the fourth quarter of the period under review, more than R81 million rand had been transferred to the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA) for disbursement to sixty (60) companies, which were approved through a rigorous process of adjudication and verification.

In the 2022-23 financial year, Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane announced a R60 million allocation during the State of the Province Address (SoPA) to cater for a new intake, with 20 May 2022, set as a deadline for new applications. "We have doubled our efforts to disburse funds allocated through the MYDF, and this has yielded positive results. Both the adjudication and verification processes are conducted with integrity, on youth-owned enterprises to ensure that only legitimate applications which meet the set criteria, are approved," the Premier stated.

Of the sixty (60) beneficiaries, 21 are from Ehlanzeni and Nkangala Districts respectively, while 18 of them are from the Gert Sibande District. The supported enterprises are in various sectors such as farming, mining and transportation, and create job opportunities, targeting the youth.

The Premier is adamant that through the MYDF intervention, the Provincial Government will flatten the high youth unemployment curve in the province. She added that more interventions to address youth unemployment, will be explored through the Mpumalanga Economic Reconstruction and Recovery (MERR) plan.

A DREAM OF DECENT SHELTER COMES ALIVE FOR A FAMILY OF 14 AT SEABE VILLAGE

Patience and determination has finally paid off for a 51 year resident of Seabi village. Ms Lisbeth Matlala's dream of a decent house, registered in her name came true when MEC for Human Settlements, Mr Speed Mashilo handed over the keys, to mark a new chapter of providing shelter to her family of 14.

Ms Matlala is among the many beneficiaries of the Department's housing project, which provides decent shelter for the vulnerable citizens in Mpumalanga. Her survival on social grants depicts the high poverty level in the Dr JS Moroka Municipality, which increased from 51.3 % in 2016 to 56.0% in 2020, due to inadequate economic activities.

By ushering Matlala to the new house MEC Mashilo affirmed the Department's commitment to improve people's livelihoods and enhanced development. At the time of going to print, a construction project of 200 houses was underway in the same Municipality. Mr Mashilo announced during the EXCO Outreach Programme that the houses will be delivered to the beneficiaries on the 29th of November 2022.



Ms Matlala's dream of a new house came true, as MEC Mashilo hands it over to her at Seabi village

Meanwhile, MEC Mashilo commended police for the arrest of 11 illegal occupants of houses in Valschfontein. Police pounced on the occupants, without a warning in a swoop. Illegal occupation are cited among the obstacles which delay the hand over of housing projects to the rightful owners. Mr Mashilo says the arrest is a signal enough that there is no place for such unscrupulous activities in Mpumalanga. "We commend the police for acting swiftly on this matter. Furthermore, it is a sign that we have a reached a point of no return to act decisively against the offenders who derive joy when the vulnerable in our communities suffer," Mr Mashilo warned.

DARDLEA'S SUPPORT PROGRAMME YIELDS THE DESIRED OUTCOMES

A poultry farmer in Mpumalanga, is among the growing list of beneficiaries from the Mpumalanga Provincial Government's support for the agricultural sector. This after the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration (DARDLEA) handed over a state of the art poultry processing equipment to the Tjakastad-based Nkanyezi Poultry project, in Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality.

The equipment has an incubator and a chicken feather plucker facility. The Poultry Poultry Project was established by 33 year old Lebohang Dhludhlu, and employs ten (10) people in total, some of whom are employed as seasonal workers.

Agriculture is key to food production in South Africa and is the backbone of the economy in the rurally-based Mpumalanga province. It is also key to job creation, to address Mpumalanga's unemployment rate, currently at 48.7%, according to Stats SA's Quarter 2 report. The Nkanyezi Poultry project was supported through the Comprehensive Agricultural Project (CASP). DARDLEA's farmer support programmes such

as CASP, seek to advance agricultural projects such as the Nkanyezi to cushion communities against the crunching effects of the high unemployment rate.

MEC for DARDLEA Ms Busi Shiba says farmer support programmes are designed to stimulate an interest in farming, especially the youth. She says through CASP, DARDLEA has positioned itself to provide the much-needed support for young farmers such as Lebohang. "Young people should not give up but develop themselves so that they are ready to grab opportunities in the agricultural sector whenever they present themselves", she explains.

The support for the Nkanyezi project comes amid the Provincial Government's efforts to re-ignite the economy, through the Mpumalanga Economic Reconstruction Plan (MERP). It is envisaged that the agricultural sector, will contribute significantly to the much needed jobs, with a target of more or less 90 000 new and sustainable jobs, to achieve a 6% unemployment rate in 2030.



MEC Shiba of DARDLEA handing over a state of the art poultry processing equipment to the Nkanyezi Poultry project.

Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane and the HTL discuss matters of common interest

Government's commitment to improve the socio-economic conditions of communities in rural areas took centre stage when the Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane and the traditional leadership exchanged views. The Premier met the Executive of the Provincial House of Traditional and Khoi-San leaders at the Nutting House recently to sharpen their views on government's intervention measures.

The meeting was a follow up after a session with the Deputy President, Mr David Mabuza in the province. Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane appraised the traditional leadership, led by the Chairperson, Kgoshi Lameck Mokoena, about road improvement initiatives, land management measures and the allocation of financial support for administration functions.

The Premier acknowledged the need to improve the state of the roads. "We have declared war on the potholes on our roads. Through the road patchers that we bought for the three Districts, we are patching potholes in all our roads. We are resolute in our commitment to make roads in our province, efficient and safe," she emphasized.

Both the Premier and traditional leaders share a common view about the importance of land management for food production. However, Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane expressed concern about the violation of land legislation in the allocation of land by unscrupulous people. "Supporting farming projects, is part of government's food security plan. The farm project in the Mantjolo Traditional Council, is a case in point, where land was made available. We provided seedlings and farming implements for the realization of this plan. We are happy that the project produces vegetables, and has created job opportunities for the local community. We call on Amakhosi to weed out unscrupulous individuals,



Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane flanked by Inkosikati Khulile Mkhathshwa and Kgosigadi Mohlala at the end of the meeting with the Executive of the HTL in Mbombela.

whose allocation of land, is in conflict with legislative processes," the Premier explained.

Recently, the Provincial Government handed over certificates of recognition to Inkhosi Misisizwe Mnisi of the Mantjolo Traditional Council, at eNkonjaneni and Ikosi Thomas Mabena of the Manala Mbhongo Traditional Council at Libangeni. The Premier assured the Executive of the House about measures to accelerate the gazette process of recognized Traditional Leaders.

A short in the arm was announced by the Premier, in support of the administration functions of the two Kings of the Ndebele nation and for the Traditional Leaders. For the Kings, the grant amount will increase from R400 000 to R1 000 000 per annum, while Traditional Leaders will receive an increased amount of R350 000 per annum from R300 000 with effect from the 2023-24 financial year.

Currently, the renovation of eight (8) critical Traditional Councils offices is underway, whilst 12 new offices will be constructed.

DCSSL INTENSIFIES THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME AMID A DECREASE IN MURDER CASES

Police's efforts to fight crime in Mpumalanga is producing the desired outcomes. By mounting high police visibility and intelligence operations in identified crime hot spots, the men in blue have clawed back their power to rid Mpumalanga of gun-toting criminals. This is evidenced in the first quarter crime statistics of the 2022/23 financial year, released by Minister Bheki Cele of the Police. A decrease in the criminal activities signifies police's determination to tackle the scourge head on during the April-June period:

- A **2,5 %** decrease in murder cases.
- A drop of **9,7 %** in sexual offences.
- A reduction of cash in transition by **33,3%**.

- A drop of **23,4%** of car hijackings.

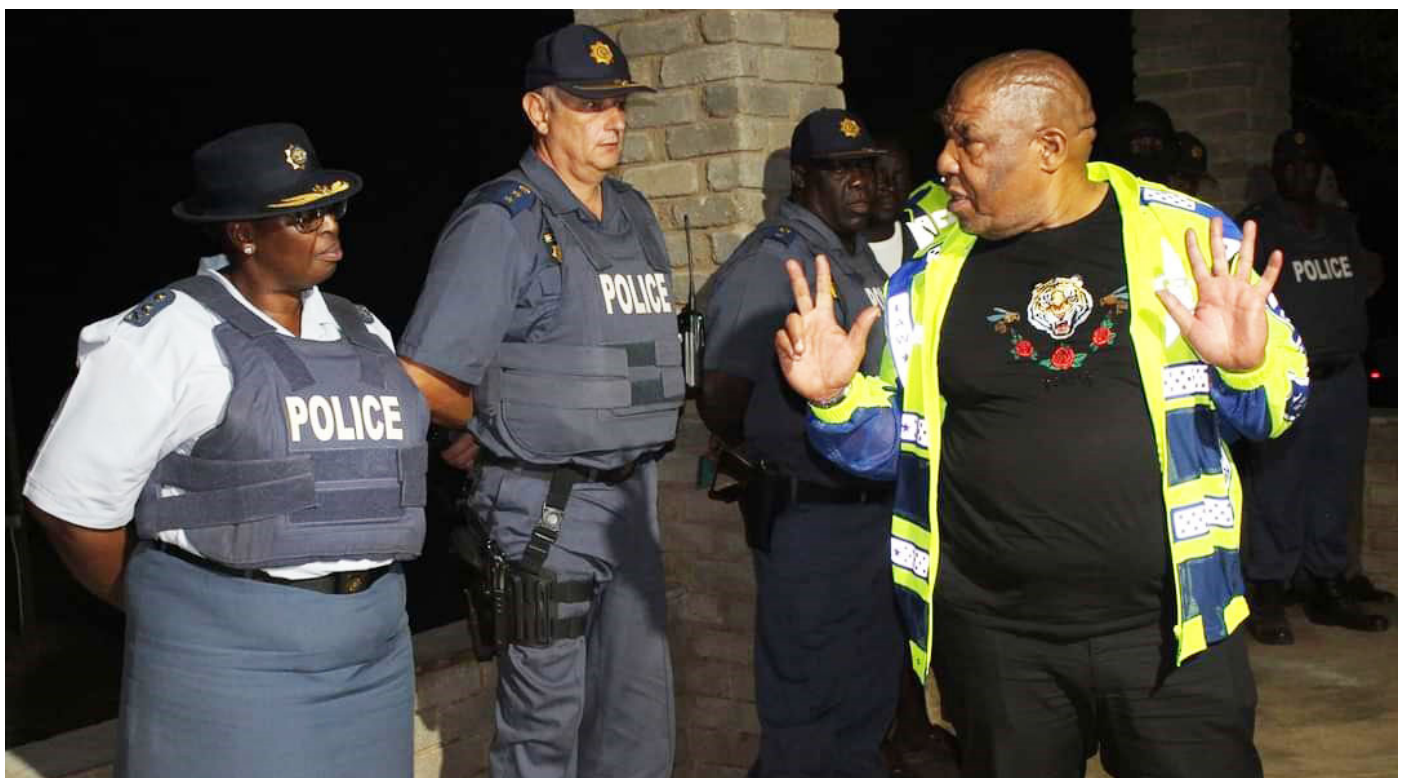
These positive results have spurred more action to confront gang-related violence. In Barber-ton, one of the areas infested with gang-related violence, has drawn the ire of MEC Vusi Shongwe of the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison (DCSSL). Mr Shongwe vowed, during an imbizo recently in Emjidini that gang-violence will soon be a thing of the past.

The Department, working with crime intelligence, has established that gang-violence is perpetuated by unscrupulous business people to destabilise their competitors. "There are leaders and business people who use children in pursuit of their ambitions. We now know that these gangs consist of under-age children who cannot be prosecuted. Behind these gangs are tavern and taxi owners who want to destroy their rivals. Go and tell them that their days are numbered," Mr Shongwe vowed.

Accusations levelled against the police, such as the alleged delays to respond to crime scenes and the collusion with criminals emerged. Such accusations confirmed the Department's view about the need to mobilize communities for participation in crime-prevention initiatives. This, according to the Department, will inspire communities to cooperate with police investigations by substantiating the accusations.

MEC Shongwe expressed commitment to attend to all matters raised by the community, including the need to impose restrictions on taverns to adhere to the required trading hours.

Provincial Commissioner, Lieutenant General Semakaleng Manamela is adamant that crime will further be on a downward spiral as police continue to confront property and contact-related crimes and stock theft.



Police visibility in crime hot spots is cited as a contributing factor in the decline of criminal activities in the first quarter of 2022/23 period.

EDUCATION TACKLES NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF LEARNER PREGNANCY

Teenage pregnancy is cited among the detrimental effects on the education and future plans of female learners. Its interference with the educational achievement of female learners, is cited in research studies as one of the societal challenges, not only in South Africa, but globally. Many scholars have detected an alarming rate of teenage pregnancies, among school-going learners.

In Mpumalanga, about 8 543 of 15 to 19 year old learners and 297 of 10 to 14 years old young girls, delivered babies in health facilities between April 2021 and March 2022. The Department of Education is intensifying measures to mitigate this, through the implementation of a Comprehensive Sexuality Education strategy.

The Department views a multi-sectoral approach as a pillar to flatten the pregnancy rate. "The Department continues to sensitize parents



MEC Majuba advocates for a multi-sectoral approach as a measure to mitigate learner pregnancy in the provincial schools.

and community structures about the negative effects of learner pregnancy. A workshop has been conducted to intensify the strategy to mitigate against this," MEC Bonakele Majuba of Education in Mpumalanga, explains.

The implementation of the strategy seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- o Ensuring that learners gain the knowledge and skills to make conscious, healthy and respectful choices about relationships and sexuality.
- o Providing an age-appropriate, culturally-relevant and right-based approach to sexuality and relationships, which explicitly addresses issues of gender and power, and provides scientifically accurate, practical information in a non-judgemental way.

The Department is concerned that a balancing act, of motherhood and education simultaneously will be an overwhelming experience for teenage mothers. Research suggests an irregular school attendance and poor school performance during and after pregnancy, as a contributing factor that leads to the girls dropping out of school.

MEC Majuba urges parents and communities to play a key role in teaching learners about the risks of teenage pregnancies. "It is inevitable that teenage pregnancy will influence future work opportunities and careers negatively, and this will contribute to unemployment among the youth. However, parental and community involvement in addressing this matter vigorously, will reduce the pregnancy rate", MEC Majuba expatiated.

IN BRIEF



MEC for Culture, Sports and Recreation, Ms Thandi Shongwe confers a certificate of honour to veteran Sports Broadcaster, Mr Shukuma Lukhele at the prestigious awards ceremony in Mbombela.



A local citizen states her case at the Premier's Imbizo in Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality.



Public servants commit themselves to Batho Pele principles by taking oath at the University of Mpumalanga's sportsfield.



Local communities in Vosman, Emalahleni Municipality now enjoy access to health services after the construction of the state of the art clinic at Sinqobile.



Coronation of Inkhosi Misisizwe Mnisi of the Mantjolo Traditional Council, at eNkonjaneni.



MEC Lindiwe Ntshalintshali of Social Development honours care givers in a graduation ceremony in Mbombela.

MPUMALANGA SPORTS AWARDS IN BRIEF



Puma's Coach, Mr Jimmy Stonehouse in a jovial mood after receiving the Coach of the year award from MEC Thandi Shongwe of Culture, Sports and Recreation at the prestigious ceremony in Mbombela.



SABC TV Sports Reporter and Team Doctor, Mr Mduzuzi Ndlovu and Dr Thulani Ngwenya display their dues respectively.

- Team of the year: **The Pumas**
- Coach of the year: **Jimmy Stonehouse**
- Sports Woman of the year/ Sports Woman of the year with a disability/ People's Choice Sports Star of the year: **Reney Raven**
- Sports Fan of the year: **Tonight Mashigo**
- DCSR's Special Sports Award: **Dr Thulani Ngwenya (Sports Doctor)**
- Special Award: **Thembisile Ngwenya (Mpumalanga Sunbirds' Coach)**
- Special Award: **Thinasonkhe Mbuli (Banyana Banyana Assistant Coach)**
- Legendary Award: **Shukuma Lukhele (Rise FM Sports Presenter)**
- Legendary Award: **Oupa Lubisi (Boxing SA Manager).**

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