

## NOTES FOR THE MEC: INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

Programme Director

Head of Department: Ms Ningi Mlangeni

District Directors

Senior Managers of the Department of Social Development

Comrades and Compatriots

Members of the media

Ladies and Gentleman

Dumelang, Siyanibonani. Avuxeni. Ndaa. Thobela. Le kae?

It is an honour for me together with the Social Development team to commemorate the International Youth Day here in Graskop today.

The United Nations' (UN) International Youth Day is celebrated on **August 12** each year to recognize efforts of the world's youth in enhancing global society. It also aims at promoting ways to engage the youth in becoming more actively involved in making positive contributions to their communities.

Many countries including South Africa participate in this global event, which may include youth conferences on issues such as education and employment. Other activities include concerts promoting the world's youth, as well as various sporting events, parades and mobile exhibitions that showcase young people's achievements.

It is in the interest of the Department of Social Development to facilitate the development of youth and it is amongst its priorities.

Challenges faced by young people in the province are so rampant and amongst them is lack of access to information, illiteracy, lack of skills, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, lack of access to higher education and unemployment.

It's a fact that the abuse of substances is rampant amongst unemployed and illiterate youth. It is also true that an ill-informed learner at Grade 12 about a career of her choice is likely to be less motivated than the learner who will be informed of her career choice to study hard and pass matric. It is also true that the more determined and motivated a girl is about to secure a better future will ensure that she stays away from engaging into sexual intercourse and focus on her education.

**Ladies and gentlemen!**, 2011 Statistics SA Report on education and employment status of youth reflects that out of **1 568 741** economically active youth in Mpumalanga Province, **448 126** are unemployed and majority of them are females, **763 523** did not complete their matric, females remain in majority as well. The challenge of unemployment in the province of Mpumalanga is dire as it is countrywide.

My Department, department of social Development in Mpumalanga Province in this financial year has provided funding to **68 Non Profit Organisations** to implement Youth Development Centres' programmes and services to young people. The services and programmes are meant to address the earlier mentioned challenges. It was therefore befitting that this event is celebrated through the display of best practices in the Youth Development Centre Programme by awarding the best three YDCs in the Province under the theme ***“Blowing our own trumpet through Youth Development Centres in empowering young people to realise their dreams”***

### **Programme director**

The need for these Youth Development Centres considering the geographic spread, the population of youth in the province is not matched with the required resources. The Department of Social Development therefore lobby's State Owned Enterprises, Parastatals, Government Departments and Private Sector to contribute in the strengthening of these Youth Development Centres.

We call upon communities and other stakeholders to ensure that our youth are provided with the necessary information that will enable them to contribute fully into Society. We call on our youth to grab every learning opportunity that should arm them to face the many challenges that constantly confront them

We would like to express our appreciation for the role played by the NYDA, SASOL and some of our sister departments in enhancing youth in the provinces

I thank you