



MEDIA LAUNCH OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MONTH AND CELEBRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR OLDER PERSONS

SPEECH

MEC

Address by the MEC for Social Development, Ms Busisiwe Shiba, during the launch of Social Development Month and celebration of International Day of Older Persons at Ehlanzeni District - Mpumalanga Province

Details of the event

Date: 01 October 2018, Monday
Venue: Mbombela Stadium (Ehlanzeni District - City of Mbombela)
Time: 10h00



social development
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, MS BUSISIWE SHIBA,
DURING THE LAUNCH OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MONTH AND CELEBRATION
OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS AT EHLANZENI DISTRICT -
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Monday, 01 October 2018

Programme Director; Mr MV Mahlalela;
Minister of Social Development, Ms S Shabangu
Members of the media;
Distinguished guests;
Ladies and gentlemen;

Siyanibonani. Avuxeni. Ndaa. A se locheni Mandebele. Thobela. Le kae?

It is an honour for me together with the Social Development team to launch the 2018 Social Development month. This year is an important year for our organisation, the ANC and the entire world, as it celebrates, under the theme: “Celebrating Older Human Rights Champions” coincides with the centenary celebrations of the icons of the liberation struggle and champions of human rights, former President Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela and Mama Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu. The theme reaffirms Government’s commitment to protecting and promoting the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by older persons.

The theme also recognises not only on of the positive contribution that older persons such as Nelson Mandela and Mama Sisulu have made, but as well, the development possibilities they represent.

Ladies and Gentlemen...

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Minister of Social Development for celebrating the International day of older persons and the launch of this crucial month of social development in our province, The province of the rising sun.

The Department of Social Development has identified October month as a period during which we reach out to meet and interact with the citizens of South Africa but in this instance in Mpumalanga our province.

The purpose is to improve communication with the people we are here to serve, and to assess the ways in which we can improve the manner in which government contributes to improving the well-being of all who live in Mpumalanga.

This government is committed to reducing high levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment. An important component of that strategy is to improve household food security so that all South Africans have access to nutritious food. Our strategy is integrated in that it seeks to support families and help small farmers improve their capacity to produce food to feed the nation. This includes looking at ways to lower the prices of essential foods and improving access to social assistance measures, such as grants and food distribution programmes.

To reduce poverty and associated challenges, the Department of Social Development works with its counter-parts, our agencies - (SASSA) and the (NDA) - and with Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) as well as Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and of course yourselves as the media to extend the hand in reaching the people of Mpumalanga by providing service delivery and information.

It is only through structured and committed partnerships that we can successfully implement our mandate which is to improve the lives of all South Africans and in particular the people who are living in Mpumalanga

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we are not only here to launch the social development month, but to also close the month of Social Crime Prevention Awareness as we have already started with buildup activities of this kind from 03 September until 29 September 2018 and celebrate the International day of older persons. You are all invited to join us after this session.

The Department of Social Development plays the critical role of assessing children in conflict with the law to determine the criminal capacity of the accused child and to assess whether the child is a suitable candidate for diversion. The department also provides diversion services in collaboration with NPOs who receive government subsidy to provide such services to the children. The department is also responsible to conduct awareness campaigns to empower the youth and the community about the consequences of crime and alternatives to make better choices in life. The objective of the event is to raise awareness about the prevalence of crime in society; The aim is to improve the safety of communities and residents' perceptions of safety in their communities so that children and families become more active and healthy.

Members of the media, this government does not make empty promises, as it is sometimes alleged, but we are walking our talk. In launching the Social Development

Month here, we reaffirm our commitment as government to speed up change towards poverty eradication and improvement of the quality of life for our people. It has always been the mission of our government under the leadership of the African National Congress to tackle injustice and inequality wherever we see it. There can be no greater injustice than children's life chances being limited by being born into poverty.

That is why the bold and historic commitment that our movement made in 1994 – to dismantle the legacy of apartheid and make poverty eradication the central theme of our work in government. It remains one of the driving purposes of our government and we are committed to taking further measures to make progress towards these goals. During this month we will intensify our efforts to ensure that all children who qualify for the Child Support Grant, especially in rural areas receive this benefit without any further delays.

We are doing this in line with the desire to care and improve the lives of our rural communities, with the needs of our children at heart. Our experience has taught us that most challenges facing our communities can be resolved when government and other role-players, support the efforts of our people and their organisation's to improve their communities. We need to work with communities and not expect the poor to carry the burden on their own. In working together, we will enhance community capacity to fight poverty, unemployment and Inequality". How do we that? You may ask. The department sustainable livelihoods programme, an initiative to support small upcoming businesses has identified households through our household profile done previously by the department, who qualify to receive some sort of support. These small business range from car wash, sewing and many others. The department procured and will deliver these items to the households during this month of October 2018 the department identified 26 households in areas of the province to provide support to kick start their businesses.

The Sustainable Livelihoods and Poverty Alleviation Programme, Food Security and Nutrition Programme is a comprehensive programme that focuses on dealing with poverty stricken, individuals, households and communities in the province, but specifically to deal with the effects of poverty and malnutrition. The programme deals with wide range interventions that combine emergencies to short-term interventions with medium and long-term responses that help create the necessary conditions for people to improve their socio economic situations. This is done through the provision of cooked meals, food parcels and developmental food security programmes for the households and communities. It also recognizes that the needs of people living in rural and urban areas differ and offers a specific set of interventions for each case in order to deal with chronic poverty, malnutrition and food insecurity.

Through household and community profiling, the department is able to identify the most vulnerable and deprived households and communities. It also determines the ability to provide the appropriate interventions aimed at combating poverty, hunger and its structural causes which continue to perpetuate inequalities and social exclusion. It is aimed at more than just creating a better living environment for the citizens of the Mpumalanga Province but to also put an end to chronic poverty through the food security and nutrition programme.

Programme Director

As we launch this year's Social Development month we are reminding all that social development issues are not only the businesses of the department but that of the social cluster and everyone else including us in here. I want to request that all search ourselves and ask "What am I doing in uplifting social issues that are faced by the people of the province"?

Allow me to highlight the activities that will be taking place during this critical month. A plan of all activities covering all districts is available which include but not limited to: In the interest of older persons, the department is today, 01 October celebrating the International day of Older persons.

The Department is observing the Social Development Month with a series of activities that seek to highlight and honour the contribution of the country's older persons to our national development. These include the Grandparents Day on Sunday, 7 October 2018 and the Active Ageing Programme scheduled to take place from 21-27 October 2018 in Mangaung, Free State Province.

"Older persons play a pivotal role and have a very positive influence in families and communities in our country. Our Government is committed to supporting older persons and enabling them to lead active, secure and meaningful lives as part of fostering social cohesion"

We are also inviting interested NPO's that are registered in terms of the Non-Profit Organizations Act, Tax Laws and programmatic legislation to submit 3-Year Business Plan Proposals. Business Plan formats and Service Specifications, which stipulate specific areas of need and the types of services required, are available at all Department of Social Development offices. Business Plan Proposals must be submitted to local offices of the Department of Social Development by 1 November 2018. A leaflet is also included in the pack given to yourselves, you are humbly requested as a very important

medium to the department and government at large to share such information to the community out there.

The department will also commemorate the International Day for Eradication of Poverty on 18 October under the Nkomazi Local Municipality. The 17th of October has been declared as the INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY. The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty has been observed every year since 1993. This day is designated by the General Assembly to promote awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution in all countries, particularly in developing countries- a need that has become a development priority. International Day for the Eradication of Poverty will be held under the theme, “Coming together with the most disadvantaged communities to build a society of universal respect for human rights and dignity.” for the current year 2018.

We all here know that Poverty in South Africa, especially in Mpumalanga Province remains as one of the greatest challenges the country is facing. The majority of the population lives on less than US\$1 per day and the vast majority live in dire poverty. The 1995 World Summit for Social Development defined absolute poverty as a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social services.

This day presents an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty, a chance for them to make their concerns heard, and a moment to recognize that poor people are the first ones to fight against poverty. Participation of the poor themselves has been at the center of the Day’s celebration since its very beginning. It also reflects the willingness of people living in poverty to use their expertise to contribute to the eradication of poverty.

Programme director, building a sustainable future requires us to intensify our efforts towards eradicating extreme poverty and discrimination, and ensuring that everyone can fully exercise their human rights. The full participation of people living in poverty, particularly in the decisions that affect their lives and communities, must be at the centre of policies and strategies to build a sustainable future. In this way, we can guarantee that our planet and our societies can fulfil the needs and aspirations of everyone – not only those of a privileged few - for this and future generations.

The department through the household and community profiling project continue to register poor socio economic conditions, rising inflations, lack of access to basic social services such as clean water, sanitation, health and lack of access to basic

infrastructure. The province also hosts the highest number of people infected and affected by the HIV virus as compared to most of the other areas in the country.

The Mpumalanga Province is thus making attempts to respond to this challenge and make poverty reduction the central objective of the provincial developmental policies. Through the process of household and community profiling the department has been able to identify and provide support to a number of needy households, non-profit institutions / organizations community and government facilities as means and endeavour to fight poverty and its concomitants to individuals and communities. The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty will thus serve as one of the attempts and programmes for the department to raise awareness and the to empower and alert the local communities about poverty and its concomitants and its effects to communities, hence the various strategies towards alleviation and eradication. Let me hereby refer you all the plan that was given to you for more activities scheduled to take place around the province for the month of Social Development.

In conclusion, we appreciate all the media house present here today, we understand and know what a powerful medium you are to the department in accessing challenges raised by members of community and communicating the services and plans of government to the community. For that; I am extending my most sincere gratitude to you all. We also call upon all to support and work in partnership with government in making Mpumalanga a better province for all. I want to emphasize that the battle lines against poverty are drawn. The Department working together with its counterparts will intensify the struggle against poverty on all fronts. The acid test of our success in this regard must be based on the extent to which we disentangle our people and vulnerable communities from abject poverty. This will continue to be our focus during this Social Development Month. The month of October is business unusual for the department as we extend the already extended hand to tackle the challenging social ills faced by the people of Mpumalanga.

The involvement and participation of communities is significant as it adds value and improves the lives of our people, in particular, those who live under trying circumstances. The Social Development month is imperative for us to listen and guide the people on how to create sustainable livelihoods, because this government is a caring government. Together we can, indeed, do more!

I thank you



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COMMENTS AND ENQUIRIES

The department of Social
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