



cogta

Department:
Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs
MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Local News

Issue no. 9

Official Newsletter

Third Quarter



- **EXECUTIVE MAYORS SIGN WATER PROVISION AGREEMENT WITH MEGA**
- **NKOMAZI MUNICIPALITY BUILDS NEW RESERVOIR**
- **COGTA AND KINGS DISCUSS LAND INVASIONS**
- **COMMUNITIES WARNED AGAINST NATURAL DISASTERS**



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Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of Mpumalanga Provincial Government, the MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, neither does it reflect views of the management. Although care has been taken to verify the accuracy of information, the editorial team of this publication takes no responsibility for any inaccuracy.

We would like to hear from you

Send your comments and suggestions to the editor on the following e-mail: gpmthethwa@mpg.gov.za. Visit our website: <http://cgta.mpg.gov.za>. Call us at: 013 766 6572

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Our department commemorated the annual World AIDS Day in December by organizing an awareness campaign attended by Community Development Workers (CDWs). The commemoration came in the wake of the Joint United Nations' Programme on HIV/AIDS report, which credit South Africa for its increased HIV scale treatment which has led to a decrease of infections by 50 000 over the past two years. The report notes that the country's HIV treatment, in which victims of the disease are provided with anti-retrovirals, contribute immensely to saving lives. With the commitment of providing 2,5 million people with anti-retrovirals by 2014, these efforts put us as a country on a leading path to save even more lives in the fight against the disease.

While our department recognizes the gains made in the fight against the disease, however, we remain vigilant to prevent any relapse. The commemoration of the day with CDWs is a ploy to make sure that every section of our officials are educated about the disease.

We commend the effort by one of our Community Development Workers, Ms Rose Masanabo, who defused tension between commuters and taxi operators at Gembok. The local community was about to embark on a violent protest to demand the decrease of taxi fares between Gembok and Kwamhlanga, when Ms Masanabo intervened by reporting the matter to a local Councillor in Ward 10, who in turn brought the two factions to the table to resolve the matter. Eventually the fares were reduced and tension was diffused.

Tensions such as these, have the potential to cause loss of lives and irreparable damage in our communities. We commend Ms Masanabo for her efforts, and hope that this will enhance the reputation of CDWs in our communities as catalysts of change.

Our department has developed Service Standards and a Charter, in line with the White Paper on the transformation of the Public Service. The Service Standards are displayed in our buildings and in the Thusong Service Centres. The Service Standards stipulates that all employees will be identified with Name Tags as part of the service delivery and improvement of transparency. As a result we are now wearing Name Tags to help you identify us appropriately

We hope you will enjoy reading this edition. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

MEC's FOREWORD

The recent public engagement meetings we have held as a department has reinforced the working relationship between Ward Councillors, Community Development Workers (CDWs) and the Traditional Leadership. Our conviction that the three structures are a bedrock of community development and service delivery was proven correct. The idea behind these engagements was to find out the underlying factors which obstruct development and service delivery, while at the same time, create space to share best practice.

During deliberations, we were able to pick up the missing link in areas where there are conflicts. We then created common grounds to improve synergy. We were also overwhelmed by some areas where the working relationship is good. Some of the best practises we have learnt are:

- Ward base planning can be a solution towards community development,
- Building of housing settlements in dangerous areas cannot take place if principles of spatial planning are adhered to, Land invasion cannot take place if the three structures work together.

We would like to thank all participants for their inputs. As we move into the next step, we hope you will be sitting on the driver's seats for the implementation of the outcomes.

We are sitting on the edge of success in the mandate given to us by the Executive to resolve disputes and claims for the traditional leadership. 30 cases have been resolved so far and the Committee (on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims) is working hard to finalize all cases submitted within the given time frame. The recent reinstatement of two of our esteemed Emakhosi, Inkhosi Mahlobo of the Mahlobo clan and Inkhosi Yende of the Yende clan both from the Mkhondo Municipality, is a sign that there is light at the end of the tunnel. They were reinstated based on the recommendations of the committee.

The committee has been strengthened by the appointment of all Committee members on a full time basis. We hope this decision by the Executive will help fast track the process of dealing with the cases. The protection and the modernization of traditional leadership remains our focal point. We will do so jealously. We hope our communities will do the same.

Land invasion is one of the problems we are confronting as a department. We have come to realize that this problem is perpetuated by self-proclaimed traditional leaders who take advantage of the kindness of Emakhosi to further their ill-gotten means. Together with Emakhosi and law enforcement agencies, we are burning the midnight oil to root out this act.



MEC MB MASUKU

We call on our communities not to fall into the trap of buying stands from these individuals, lest they are found guilty by association or as accomplice.

Mpumalanga has been selected as one of the provinces to host the 2013 African Cup of Nations (AFCON). Our hospitality as hosts for sporting events remains a milestone achievement and we hope to keep it that way.

Our department remains on high alert for any disaster. We have realized that our province is prone to storms due to heavy rains. We appeal to our communities to ensure that their roof tops are strong and that those crossing rivers, dams and water streams are cautious when they do so. Safety should be the responsibility of us all.

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE HOD



HOD DAVID MAHLOBO

Our municipalities are on the forefront for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which has been signed by the Premier, Mr David Mabuza, the Mpumalanga Economic Development Agency (MEGA) and the Executive Mayors. As a department, we have jolted into action to make sure that this opportunity does not slip between our fingers. Access to water by our people is not a luxury but a right enshrined in the Bill of Rights. As such we jump into every opportunity which presents itself to provide them.

As a department responsible for co-ordination, we are working closely with the nine affected municipalities namely, **Mkhondo, Albert Luthuli, Bushbuckridge, Nkomazi, Mbombela, Dr JS Moroka, Emalahleni and Thembisile Hani**. Our recent meeting with Municipal Managers, Chief Financial Officers and Technical Managers have helped us to put time frames and the nature of technical assistance required for our people to be provided with water. Limited funds and technical expertise make this task to be elusive. However, we are a step away from achieving this. We therefore appeal to our communities to exercise patience.

Our efforts to make a meaningful contribution in the society remains entrenched. That is why we have made it our business to support government's initiatives aimed at improving our society. On World AIDS Day, we went to the Community

Development Workers to educate them about the dangers of the disease. With the figures of HIV and AIDS reportedly soaring, we took it upon ourselves to invite experts to educate them. As foot soldiers of government at the coalface, working with communities out there to bring services closer, the need to educate them cannot be over-emphasized. We have no doubt that this initiative has the potential to permeate the broader society so that the message about the disease can reach the furthest corners of our society. We will stop at nothing to fight against the spread of the disease.

We also went out to educate the Louville community about domestic violence as part of the 16 Days of Activism against abuse of women and children. We commend our transversal unit for these good initiatives.

Our department is reeling in shock about the death of Mr Joshua Maseko, the acting Municipal Manager of Dipaleseng Local Municipality. Before his appointment as Acting Municipal Manager, Mr Maseko was Head of Corporate Services at the Gert Sibande District. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this time of bereavement.

South Africa is a signatory to the United Nations' Convention against corruption. The convention was signed on behalf of our government by the Public Service Commission in 2003. Over the years, a number of activities have been initiated by government in support of the convention, amongst them the establishment of an anti-corruption toll free number for the public to report acts of corruption.

Increasingly, there are signs that corruption is not being tolerated, and through combined efforts on the public and private fronts differences can be seen. In December, we joined the world in commemorating this day, as part of our commitment to root out corruption even within our ranks. We encourage our stakeholders to join forces with us in acting against corrupt elements, by contacting. Guided by our whistle-blowing policy, we assure anyone acting in support of this convention, that we will act accordingly in the spirit of building a corruption-free society.

As a department responsible for co-ordination of Disaster Management in the province, we remain high on alert. Over the years, we have realized that natural disasters know no season. Events taking place in our province, such as the 2013 AFCON games during the January and February period, we are working jointly with Ehlanzeni District and Mbombela Local Municipalities to provide the necessary support required in the event of a disaster. Much as we put our efforts together to provide the assistance, we also appeal to our people not to contribute to situations that will fuel potential disaster, and

MUNICIPALITIES SIGN WATER PROVISION DEAL WITH MEGA



AGREEMENT: Emalahleni Municipality's Executive Mayor, Cllr Salome Sithole signs on the dotted line directed by Mr Mabuza during the MOU ceremony.

Eight water stressed municipalities in Mpumalanga have signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), with the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA) aimed at providing bulk water. The MOU was signed by the Premier, Mr David Mabuza, MEGA's Chairperson, Mr Jerry Vilakazi and Executive Mayors representing the eight municipalities at the Premier's office. It follows the Premier's visits to various municipalities to assess the water infrastructure and the challenges in delivering water to the people.

According to the Premier, it is just a matter of time before the majority of people have access to water in the eight distressed municipalities. "This problem of the lack of water is mainly affecting our communities in the villages. Although as a government we have made many strides in other things, people do not understand that for 18-years, we simply cannot give them water. I had set myself a time frame that at least by 2014 more than 90 percent of the people in our province should have access to clean and drinking water," Mr Mabuza said.

The signing of the MOU does not take away any authoritative powers and responsibilities of the municipalities but serves to bind the municipalities to co-operate with MEGA and the Department of Water Affairs in attaining the bulk supply of water to the affected communities. In his address, Mr Mabuza told signatories that: "All of us are working for the people of this province, let us work very diligently and make sure that people do get water. It is high time that we work together and stop complaining about the problems we have inherited from the previous regime. We can no longer blame the past, whatever we inherited, belongs to us, and it is our problem today," he said.

Despite challenges such as old ageing water infrastructure, Mr Mabuza believes the province has the capacity to resolve the water crisis. "We have taken it upon ourselves as a province to deal with these problems, and with all the expertise we now have at our disposal, in the next coming few days, we must land at the right place and have these water problems solved," concluded Mabuza.

The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) has given credence to the Premier's bold statement by establishing a water services unit, headed by Mr Nkadimeng, to strengthen the provincial government's capacity to deal with the water crisis. The unit is expected to unblock hurdles which prevent provision of water to affected communities.



DEMAND FOR WATER: Residents in some villages fetch water, using vehicles.

NKOMAZI MUNICIPALITY BUILDS NEW RESEVOIR TO PROVIDE WATER

Government's commitment to provide water to all communities in the country by 2014 remains in full force. The three spheres of government, National, Provincial and Municipalities are working around the clock to meet the 2014 milestone. At Khomba-so, near Mbuzini, the Nkomazi Local Municipality built a R41 million water reservoir project aimed at providing water to 23 800 households is underway. The reservoir, to be completed by June 2013, will bring relief to communities facing acute shortage of water in the following areas:

- **Mbangwane,**
- **KaMandulo,**
- **Mbuzini,**
- **Khomba-so,**
- **Tsambokhulu,**
- **Mananga.**

The target to provide water to all communities by 2014 has been set by the United Nations as part of the Millennium goals and South Africa is one of the signatories. Although government is sparing no efforts to make this a reality, several obstacles are at stake. According to the Premier, Mr David Mabuza, poor infrastructure and the expansion of households is a cause for concern. "The main problem is the ageing infrastructure and the fact that in some areas the population had expanded and the water treatment plants cannot handle the demand. In some areas, municipalities were not permitted in terms of their licences to draw more water from the sources to supply their extended communities", says Mr Mabuza.

Lack of access to clean water by residents in the six localities has exposed them to waterborne diseases as they drank water without treating it direct from rivers and dams. Nkomazi Executive Mayor, Cllr Thulisile Khoza says the

construction of the reservoir is an intervention aimed at tackling the water shortage head on. "We want to replace bulk infrastructure to ensure that it can cope with the current demand, project future demand, as well as eradication of backlogs", Cllr Khoza asserts.

Nkomazi Municipality has been identified as one of the eight municipalities in Mpumalanga which requires intervention for water solution. The other municipalities are **Mkhondo, Albert Luthuli, Bushbuckridge, Nkomazi, Mbombela, Dr JS Moroka, Emalahleni and Thembisile Hani.** The Provincial Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Mpumalanga Economic Growth and Agency (MEGA) to provide assistance in an effort to resolve the water shortage.



WATER PLAN: MEC Madala Masuku and Nkomazi Executive Mayor, Cllr Thulisile Khoza are working together as the leadership of COGTA and Nkomazi Municipality respectively, to provide water to affected areas in Nkomazi.



DEAL: Premier David Mabuza and Nkomazi Executive Mayor, Cllr Thulisile Khoza signs a Memorandum of Understanding for the provision of water to the Nkomazi community.

WARD COMMITTEES GETS A SHORT IN THE ARM



BACK UP: Ward councillors in Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, led by Executive Mayor, Cllr Renias Khumalo, are amongst those whose expenses are paid for in the allocation by Treasury.

Ward Committees are a legislated body tasked with the responsibility to mobilize communities in each ward of all municipalities for public participation. The committees consist of ten members and the Ward Councillor becomes the Chairperson of the committee. Discussing the needs, challenges and finding possible solutions of the community in each ward forms part of the committee's functions, while at the same time, playing a linkage role between the community and the municipal council, by informing the community about council decisions.

Over the years, Ward Committees have been performing their duties at their own expense. This has, to some extent, hampered the performance and effectiveness of some of them. In pursuit of effective functionality of Ward Committees Government has set aside an allocation in which each member will be paid R500 to help improve their functionality. The allocation is expected to help fund the functionality of Ward Committees and their activities. In view of the allocation, ward committees are also expected to develop operational plans by March 2013

Allocation for the payment of Ward Committees has been given to municipalities to disburse it. Ward Committee members in the **Nkangala District** in four local municipalities, namely: **Thembisile Hani, Emakhazeni, Dr J.S Moroka and Victor**

Khanye Local Municipalities. In **Gert Sibande District**, **950** Ward Committee members are to share **R571834** in six municipalities, namely: **Albert Luthuli, Dipaleseng, Msukaligwa, Lekwa, Mkhondo and Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipalities.** In **Ehlanzeni District**, an amount of **R780001** has been allocated to **930** ward committee members in five municipalities, namely: **Nkomazi, Umjindi, Thaba Chweu and Bushbuckridge Local Municipalities.**

The financial boost is one of the several efforts government is putting in place to support Ward Communities to execute their mandate. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), has initiated a number of trainings for ward committee members. This is in line with the pronouncement by MEC Madala Masuku during a Budget Speech vote in the legislature, in which he said: "The wards form the basic units for participatory and democratic local government. However, there are serious challenges with regard to the effectiveness of the Ward Committee System in enhancing the involvement of communities in meaningful local decision-making. It is therefore critical to strengthen our people-centred approach to governance and development and deepen democracy," he said, earlier this year.

DEPARTMENT MEETS KING MABHOKO III AND KING MAKHOSIKE II TO DISCUSS LAND INVASIONS

The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in Mpumalanga has met with King Mabhoko III of the Ndzudza-Mabhoko and King Makhosoke II of the Ndebele nation to discuss issues of land invasion and people falsely claiming to be “Traditional Leaders” and misleading the public. TCOGTA appealed to the two Kings to assist in dealing with these scourges and disassociate themselves from people who misuse their names when carrying out such acts. Several cases of people allocating land without the authority of Traditional leaders have been reported in areas within their jurisdiction. Cases of self appointed traditional leaders have also been reported.

COGTA has indicated that the allocation of land should be done in line with the Spatial Development Plan (SDP) and the Integrated Development Plan (IDPs). Failure to follow these plans, according to COGTA, may result in people being allocated land in areas not suitable for human habitation or in places where other forms of development were planned. The department also raised a concern that there is a high risk of running short of grazing land, burial sites and land for other sources of life in future if land invasion is not stopped.

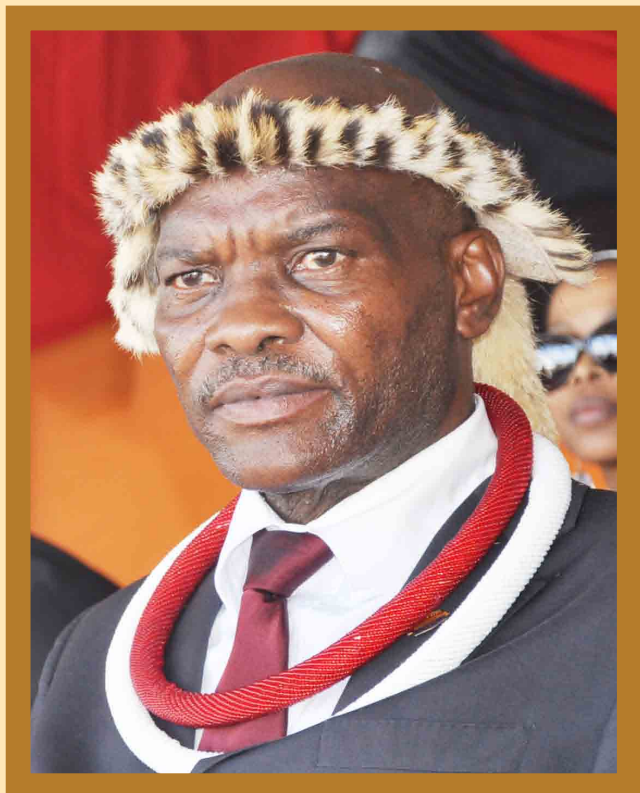
The department appealed to the two Kings to help bring to an end, tendencies of people appointing themselves as traditional leaders without following due processes. Traditional Leaders are appointed in terms of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 read with the Mpumalanga Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, 2005 which provide a comprehensive process which must be followed when identify-

ing and recognizing traditional leaders. Traditional Leaders refer to King, Queen, Principal Traditional Leader, Senior Traditional Leader and Headmen or Headwomen.

The provisions of the above-mentioned legislation provides that whenever the position of any of the above-mentioned traditional leaders must be filled, the royal family in line with its customary law of succession must identify a person who qualifies to fill the position. It should be noted that the first requirement is that the position must be vacant (due to death or removal) and secondly the royal family must identify a person who qualifies to assume the position of the traditional leader concerned.

The law further provides that after the royal family concerned has identified the person who qualifies, the royal family must inform the Premier of the Province, who must then recognize the person identified by the Royal Family, through a notice in the Provincial Gazette, and issue a certificate of recognition, and the Premier must inform the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders about the particulars of the identified person. It should be noted that the Premier may refuse to issue the certificate of recognition only if the identification was done contrary to customary law and the applicable legislation.

The department would also like to state categorically clear that there can be no traditional leader appointed without following the relevant processes and legislations and without being in possession of certificate of recognition signed by the Premier of Mpumalanga.



KING MAKHOSIKE II



KING MABHOKO III

CDWS ATTENDS WORLD AIDS DAY COMMEMORATION



HEALTH PROMOTION: Testing for HIV and AIDS is free.

The latest HIV and AIDS statistics released by the Department of Health shows that the Gert Sibande District in Mpumalanga has the highest prevalence of the disease. Figures released by Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi shows the level of prevalence has increased from 38.8 percent to 46.8 percent. High unemployment and poverty rate are cited as some of the contributing factors for the increase. Mining in that region is the backbone of the economy, and as a result, migrant workers are attracted to provide labour.

The increase comes in the wake of initiatives by government to reduce the prevalence of the disease. These include the introduction of male circumcision, rolling out of anti-retroviral drugs and campaigns to encourage people to use condoms. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) has entered the fray by targeting Community Development Workers (CDWs) to educate them about the disease on World Aids Day. Under the theme: "Getting to Zero", CDWs were educated about the dangers of the disease and preventative methods.

National Association of People Living with Aids (NAPWA), Mr Lucky Gwebu encouraged CDWs to consider circumcision. "The male medical circumcision according to reports from World Health Organization (WHO) can reduce the chances of contracting the virus by 60%. It must be clear that circumcision does not prevent a person from contracting the virus," Mr Gwebu told the audience, at the Nelspruit Library.

During the function, CDWs were given an opportunity to ask questions about the disease. According to Mr Gwebu, the nature of the questions by CDWs gives a sense of understanding about the disease. Gwebu says the nature of CDW work in the communities shows that they can be part of the solution in the fight against the disease.

Gwebu, who is living with the disease, encouraged people to test for HIV and AIDS. He says this will help them to act with precaution when tested positive.

COGTA IN ACTION



ON THE SPOT: HOD, Mr David Mahlobo demands answers from municipal officials on provision of water to communities during a meeting with Municipal Managers and CFOs at Ehlanzeni District Council. CEO for Mpumalanga Economic and Growth Agency (MEGA), Adv. Boyce Mkhize looks on.



ACCOUNTABILITY: Bushbuckridge Municipal Manager, Mr Doctor Shabangu prepares a presentation on water service delivery for residents in his municipal jurisdiction during the COGTA-led meeting at Ehlanzeni District Council.



TEAM WORK: A participant illustrates a point during COGTA's public engagement in Ermelo. MEC Masuku pays attention to the illustration.



PLANNING: COGTA's Ms Thoko Mokoena and Mr Kgomotso Manzini prepare documentation for distribution during the department's public engagement function at the Gert Sibande District office.



ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION: Ward councillors, Traditional Councillors and Community Development Workers discuss innovative ways of working together during COGTA's public engagement function at Mbombela Civic Centre.



HELPING HAND: Chairperson of HTL, Kgosi Lameck Mokoena and Business woman, Ms Norah Fakude-Nkuna hands over food parcels to local families in Acornhoek ahead of Christmas. HTL's Mr Sabelo Mdaka helps them.

COGTA IN ACTION



HISTORY: Members of the Committee on Traditional Leadership claims and disputes, Mr Phineas Nxumalo and Ms Gloria Fakude record the analogy of witnesses about the Nkosi clan and history during public hearings for the Nkosi claim at Milliken Farm School in Mpuluzi.



EXPERIENCE: A member of the community in Piet Retief gives an account of the Tshabalala dispute at a local hall during public hearings by the Committee on Traditional Leadership claims and disputes.



EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE: An elder from the Mvangatini community shares a historical perspective about the Lukhele Traditional leadership during public hearings of the Committee on Traditional Leadership claims and disputes.



ON BOARD: Members of the House of Traditional Leaders, Inkhosi Bheki Mnisi, Kgosi Lameck Mokoena and Inkhosi Sandile Ngomane and MEC Masuku welcome Inkhosi Yende (2nd from left) of Oganyaneni and Inkhosi Mahlobo of Mahlobo Traditional Authority (2nd from right) during the special sitting of the house in the legislature.



CONCENSUS: COGTA and Ikwekwezi FM's officials share a common understanding of traditional leadership in Mpumalanga at the end of a meeting at the SABC offices in Pretoria. (L-R): Mr Tira Masango, Mr Timothy Masango, Mr Johny Sibanyoni, Mr Paulos Mnisi, Mr Zakhele Mbhele, Mr Sam Mtsweni, Mr Peter Mahlangu, Mr Khuli Mahlangu and Mr Saphuya Mabuza.



WINNING FORMULA: COGTA's officials display their medals after participating in activities during a breast awareness campaign. (L-R): Ms Kholiwe Mbokodo, Ms Nicotia Mokgala, Ms Happy Nkosi and Ms Charlotte Nyalungu. (Seated): Ms Sizakele Ngomane and Ms Mpumi Mashigo

MEC MASUKU FOSTERS WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WC, CDWS AND TRADITIONAL LEADERS

The working relationship between Ward Councillors (WC), Community Development Workers (CDWs) and Traditional Leaders came under scrutiny during the department's public engagement sessions. The sessions were held in Gert Sibande District office in Ermelo, Mbo mbela's Civic Centre, Emalahleni's Civic Centre and Acornhoek Hall with the view to improve the working relationship between the three structures.

During the meetings, MEC for COGTA, Mr Madala Masuku told the gatherings about the importance of working together for rural development and for improvement of service delivery. However, he expressed concern about simmering tension in some areas where these structures are at loggerheads. "There cannot be service delivery and development where the CDW for example, is at a forefront of a march to get rid of a Ward Councillor. Sometimes, CDWs see an opportunity to be appointed in the place of a councillor, if that councillor is forced to vacate the seat. Why should it be like that?" Mr Masuku enquired.

Despite a pocket of tensions in some wards, some of the structures serve as good models for areas where poor relations are reported. In Albert Luthuli's Ward 9, a Ward-based development plan has been finalized, according to the Ward Councillor, Mr Fana Nkosi. "Our Ward is based in Mayflower. We have a development plan which includes construction of a Shopping Complex. Every structure of the community, including our CDW, Mr Siphethu Nkosi, knows what is happening in that area. Land on which construction will take place was given by our municipality," said Cllr Nkosi much to the amusement of Mr Masuku who advised other structures to emulate.

According to MEC Masuku, Albert Luthuli's Ward 9 is one of the many examples which show that working together of community structures can go a long way to improve the lives of communities. In Gert Sibande, he told participants that in areas such as Schoemansdal, in the Nkomazi Municipality, so advanced is the development plan that it includes issues of Disaster Management, in which the ward community is conscientized about dangerous areas not to go during the rainy season to avoid lightning. He warned other structures which renege on their mandate that action will be taken against them. "A CDW for example who wants to participate in any political activity, must do so by first resigning from his/her position. Otherwise, a CDW who leads a march against a councillor, must be expelled from the department because his/her action is anti-development," the MEC said in one of the meetings.

The meetings were characterized by break-away ses-

sions in which participants contributed towards a plan to improve the working relationship. The Provincial Chairperson of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), Cllr Mafika Nkosi applauded the department for the initiative to resolve tensions and improve working relations between the structures. Cllr Nkosi said the department's efforts are in sync with SALGA's plan for service delivery improvement by councillors and municipalities.



NEW PAGE: MEC Masuku illustrates a point during the public engagement meeting in Acornhoek.



WAY FORWARD: A participant shares his thoughts in Gert Sibande District office during COGTA's public engagement meeting.

COMMUNITIES WARNED AGAINST NATURAL DISASTERS



WEATHER ALERT: Disaster Management's official in COGTA, Mr Jacques Benade calls for caution to reduce the impact of natural disaster.

Communities in the Nkomazi Municipality have experienced the torment of storms which have hit their villages severely over the past two years. In January 2012, a storm with heavy rains

left a trail of devastation, when villages became flooded, causing human loss, destruction of property and infrastructure and further causing disruption to services.

According to scientists, natural disasters such as storms cannot be prevented, but the impact can be reduced if communities exercise caution. Recently the department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in conjunction with the Department of Water Affairs, Ehlanzeni District and Nkomazi Municipalities held an awareness campaign at the Driekoppies Dam outside Malelane, to caution local residents about the dangers of disasters. COGTA's Mr Jacques Benade told residents about the department's warning systems. "As a Disaster Management team, we send out warnings to municipalities and communities about possible disasters. We disseminate such warnings on local radio stations. We therefore appeal to everyone to take these warnings seriously," warned Benade.

Government spends in excess millions of rands to deal with the aftermath of a

disaster to cover the costs of emergency response, rescue, recovery and reconstruction from the destruction. In 2011 millions of rands were spent in rebuilding damaged roads, a collapsed bridge and several schools in Nkomazi as a result of severe storms. Several families had to be evacuated and provided with food when their houses collapsed. Benade says in some instances, human loss during a disaster, is as a result of failure on the part of victims to take heed of the warnings. He added that failure to consult with local authorities during the building of houses, puts people's lives at high risk when disasters hit. "People must first consult with their municipalities or headmen for a good area for settlement. It is sad when people are washed away just because they were located in a water-logged area," said Benade.

The campaign was also attended by a weather expert, Ms Lebogang Mashile of the South African Weather Service (SAWS). Mashile warned community members to avoid standing under trees and using metals during thunderstorms and lightning.



DANGER ZONE: Communities are warned not to risk their lives by crossing collapsed bridges.

COGTA TAKES 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM FOR NO VIOLENCE AND ABUSE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN TO THE LOUVILLE COMMUNITY

It has been 18 years since the United Nations declared the abuse against women and children a universal problem which requires a universal approach for a solution. Since then South Africa introduced the 16 Days of activism for no violence and abuse against women and children as part of government's programme of action to bring acts of violence against women and children to an end. Through this campaign, communities are educated about illegal acts of violence in which perpetrators are prosecuted.

The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) took the campaign to Louville outside Malelane to educate the local community, in partnership with the Departments of Social Development, Labour, Justice, National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and the Commission for Gender Equality. This is part of the department's efforts to fight against the abuse. During the function, a Social Worker, Ms Dumisile Ali told the gathering about the effects of domestic violence. "Domestic violence is one of the contributing factors to children's displacement and family breakdown. It starts at family level and spirals to the community at large," she warned.

Ms Ali further told the local community about the rights of children, as stipulated in the Child Act. "The right to shelter, education and nutrition is clearly stipulated in the act. You are not doing them any favour when you take them to school, when you give them food. It is an offence for prosecution if we as parents do not provide them with these," Ms Ali warned.

During the function, the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities was commended for introducing legislation which will prevent victims of abuses to withdraw cases. Although the process to promulgate the act into legislation is still underway, Social Workers believe that this will contribute towards the initiatives to make abuses intolerant in local communities.

Louville has a centre for abused women and children. The local community was urged to use the centre to report cases of abuse.



HOPE: Local residents in Louville were the targets of COGTA's 16 days campaign.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT TURNS TO EMAKHOSI FOR SOLUTIONS

The high prevalent of HIV and AIDS in Gert Sibande District announced by the Department of Health recently has jolted the Mpumalanga province into more action, to stem the turn against the disease. MEC for Health and Social Development, Dr Mkasi says the prevalent rate has increased from 38,8percent to 46,8 percent, and this is a major cause for concern for Mpumalanga.

Addressing a special sitting of the House of Traditional Leaders in the legislature, Mkasi appealed to all traditional leaders to do everything in their power to help fight against the spread of the disease. "Our department is implementing a number of intervention strategies to combat the disease. We are implementing male circumcision. We are rolling out anti-retroviral drugs in our medical centres. We are training and recruiting doctors to increase the number of doctors in our hospitals. We are also training and recruiting more nurses to work in our clinics. But we cannot win the fight alone as a department. We need your help," urged Mkasi.

Mkasi said traditional leaders command a strong authoritative voice in tribal areas and this can be an impetus against the disease. We see traditional leaders playing a crucial role in encouraging males to do circumcision. We also have hospital boards which play an oversight role in the functionality of our hospitals. We believe as a department that traditional leaders can play a crucial role for the effectiveness of our hospitals. I have already signed the proclamations for the boards, however, we can find a way to have you as our part," Mkasi said.

MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), was amongst the speakers who addressed the house. In his speech, he welcomed Inkhosi Mahlobo of the Mahlobo Traditional Authority and Chief Yende of Oganyane-ni. Both were recently re-instated by Premier David Mabuza following recommendations by the Committee on Traditional Leadership disputes and claims. Apart from the re-instatement of the two, Masuku further briefed the house about additional 28 cases resolved by the committee and the department's efforts to improve the functionality of both the house and the committee.



OFFICIAL GUEST: Kgosi Moloi of Lekgoetla Traditional Council was amongst the traditional leaders who attended the special sitting of the house.



RECOGNITION: Inkhosi Themba Yende of Oganyaneni is given a warm reception as he prepares to take his seat in the legislature during a special sitting. He is accompanied by HTL's Ms Kate Mahlangu.

SERVICE STANDARDS OF THE DEPARTMENT

1. SERVICE STANDARDS

The ideal standard of service, which COGTA commits itself to, can be described in the following manner:

- All COGTA Employees will be identified with Name Tags at all times.
- All officials should always be presentable and formally dressed.
- Employees of the department shall be expected to be polite, helpful, respectful and courteous to their colleagues and service beneficiaries always.
- We will attend to complaints within 5 working days.
- Information and/or complaint raised by the complainant is confidential and shall always be treated as such by employees of the department.
- We will update you bi-weekly and inform you of progress until complaint has been addressed.
- Your call will be answered within 3 rings.
- The Department will publish informative literature through annual reports, newsletters and website.
- Departmental information will be made accessible

to our service beneficiaries in compliance with relevant legislation.

2. QUALITIES OF COGTA EMPLOYEES

The departmental employees shall always possess and maintain the following characters:

- Good Communication Skills.
- Creative and Innovative.
- Diversity Management Skills.
- Conflict Management Skills.
- Exceptional Knowledge of the Department and Government Structures.
- Practice Participative Management.
- Appreciates diverse cultural values of life and practice the Principles of Batho Pele.

3. DEPARTMENTAL VALUES

- Professionalism.
- Goal oriented.
- Community centred.
- Service delivery excellence.

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MISSION

Facilitate and co-ordinate Intergovernmental
Structures and Developmental Agencies for
Sustainable Integrated Service Delivery
through Public Participation and
Traditional system of governance

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