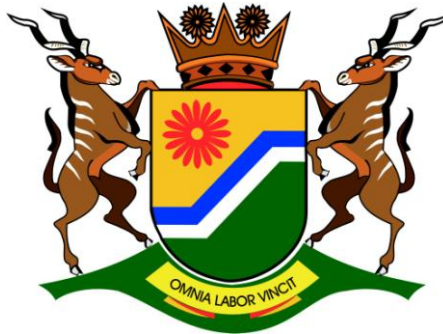


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Department of Human Settlements

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Umnyango
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Media Release 19 September 2014

GOVERNMENT COMMITS TO TACKLE COMMUNITY PLIGHT *"A cry that came during Cabinet's visit at Middelburg".*

A 38 year old unemployed qualified paramedic and mother of two, Girly Mahlangu was amongst eight destitute families of Skhulile Village, in Middelburg, Mpumalanga who received household items, food parcels and blankets from government. Provincial Human Settlements, MEC Violet Siwela met these families during the Executive Council's Outreach Programme this week. The visit during door-to-door programme by members of the Executive Council and Steve Tshwete Local Municipality is part of community engagement by government. During the interactions, MEC Siwela committed government to intervene in the communities' plight of joblessness, education, water and sanitation services.

On her visit at all eight households, MEC Violet Siwela urged the families to educate children on HIV and Aids, drugs and alcohol because these are the things that kill and affect the whole country. **"As government, we request all of you to attend izimbizo and community project for you to get information on how you can be assisted"** appealed MEC Siwela. She pleaded with them to run to churches and recreational activities so as to avoid challenges of social ills. **"The statistics of HIV and Aids is very high especially in our province; let us protect ourselves from it"**, continued MEC Siwela.

Some residence of Skhulile Village stay in houses built by Mafube Coal Mine and the Department delivered substantial low income houses (RDP's) and other projects are currently underway. The delegation also learnt that there are challenges of inconsistent drainage system and poor supply of water. The Department's mandate is to ensure that people have integrated and sustainable human settlements. One family of five orphaned children (Mahlangu) who survive through government's child support grant depend on child grant were delighted with the donations. **"God has heard our plea; we did not have any food to eat nor a visit from the government authorities, my two younger siblings went to school on empty stomachs in the morning but they will find food after school"** said the unemployed 26 year old tearful Sarah Mahlangu.

The provincial administration (Executive Council) engages with communities through the outreach programme at municipalities. The programme looks at state of service delivery in municipalities, stakeholder engagement, family visits, and community meeting the week-long visit. Issues gathered at all the sessions are consolidated into a report by the Office of the Premier and get processed by the respective departments and government entities after each visit.

ISSUED BY THE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE
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