



MEDIA STATEMENT

LAUNCH OF WOMEN'S MONTH ACTIVITIES BY THE WESTERN CAPE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (DevCom) OF THE JUSTICE CRIME PREVENTION AND SECURITY CLUSTER (JCPS)

30 QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, AA BUILDING: 5th AUGUST 2014 CAPE TOWN

An effective, speedy and holistic justice service to vulnerable groups and in particular women and children is the core function of the Justice Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (JCPS) in the Western Cape.

The Western Cape Development Committee (DevCom) - a sub-structure of the provincial JCPS, of has set out to coordinate a unified Women's Month Programme in the Western Cape this year. DevCom along with NGOs, the legal fraternity, religious and community leaders will put their hands together as we celebrate Women's Month through a month-long programme which will be launched this Saturday, 9 August 2014, in Philippi.

DevCom will be joining the masses across South Africa in celebrating the Women's Month 2014 which is themed **"Celebrating 60 years of the Women's Charter and 20 Years of Freedom. Moving Women's Agenda forward"**

The fundamental objective of this collective is ensuring that the agenda for women in our province is elevated. DevCom is no stranger to the relentless struggles waged by women against the injustices of apartheid. Men and Women dedicated their lives to ensure a better life for all through socio-economic and political emancipation.

There is no doubt that during the 20 years of Democracy our country has made remarkable strides in terms of achieving the aspirations of Women. This is evident in the number of legislations and other policy frameworks which were passed during this period. We must however indicate that as much as we celebrate the achievements we have made so far, as Devcom, we remain concerned about the abuse of Women and Children in our province. We believe that these practices are nothing but an act of undermining the rights of vulnerable people. It is therefore condemned in the strongest terms.

This Women's Month, our collective activities have been divided into three programmes:

Programme 1: JCPS Service Delivery Imbizos which will inform targeted communities of their rights in terms of the criminal justice system, with a particular focus on maintenance; sexual offences and domestic violence matters. At least two service delivery imbizos will take place each week throughout the month in areas including Nyanga, Malmesbury, Steenberg, Mitchells Plain, Clanwilliam, Knysna and close the programme in Delft on 30 August 2014.

Programme 2: Community Outreach Programmes which will be held in partnership with the various JCPS Cluster departments and civil society organisations. The purpose of the outreach programme is to create awareness on women and gender issues and interventions by the different government departments promoting and protecting women's rights. The activities will take the form of information stalls, Master's Services; SAPS search operations, SAPS Forensic Workshops, Tracing Operations, Community Dialogues, Awareness, and Marches. Cluster partners and stakeholders will be conducting outreach programmes to empower communities about their rights and responsibilities in relation to the Children's Act, Divorces, Custody and Access, Sexual Offences, Domestic Violence, Protection Orders and the Master's services in the forms of having their wills drawn up at no cost.

Programme 3: Access to Justice Week runs from 28 August 2014 to 29 August 2014. This Programme aims to inculcate a culture of community service within the legal fraternity through the provision of free legal advice at identified Advice Offices and community-based organisations.

DevCom will continue to promote a Criminal and Civil Justice System which is responsive, cost effective and sensitive to the needs of the most vulnerable. We call upon all communities to stand up and speak out against any form of abuse and report all crimes to their nearest police station.

We also, appeal to communities join the events planned in our Women's Month programme. A brief concept document on our planned Women's Month schedule of events which outlines the itinerary for all three programmes will provided in the media pack.

DevCom representatives present here will elaborate on specific events of our Women's Month programme.

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