

Media Statement
Department of Social Development

To All Media

Tuesday 10 October 2023

TRADITIONAL LEADERS CALLED TO JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV/AIDS AND GBVF

Traditional Leaders have been called to join the fight against gender based violence and the scourge of HIV/AIDS.

This emerged during the Traditional Leaders dialogue on HIV/AIDS and gender based violence and femicide held at Dikgale Traditional council today (10 October 2023).

Addressing the event on behalf of MEC, Nandi Ndalane, MMC responsible for Strategic Planning from the Capricorn District Municipality, Councillor, Solly Mahlatji said: "By engaging in an open and honest conversations, we can collectively identify strategies to address HIV/AIDS, promote comprehensive sexual education and support survivors of gender based violence." This government recognizes the role, the influence and the authority of traditional leaders and as a result we have taken a firm position to put them central in our planning in the fight against these twin challenges."

Representing the Capricorn district AIDS Council, Rev. Awedzani Nemauxhwe condemned old men who impregnate girls as young as 10 years adding that they destroy their future and in extreme circumstances infect them with sexually transmitted infections. He called on the community to expose all incidences of gender based violence and refrain from sweeping them under the carpet. He blamed alcohol as one of the social drivers which has direct impact on the spread of HIV/AIDS and called on people to refrain from the abuse of alcohol.

Representing Traditional Leadership, Mr Sekoti Dikgale, called on Government to make service delivery points available at Traditional Councils offices. "We need social workers, SASSA, Home Affairs, SAPS offices to be made available in our offices so that communities can easily access these services," added Dikgale.

The Director responsible for, Restorative Justice from the Department of Social Development Ms Kgomotlokoa Maibele, called on Traditional leaders and Traditional healers to work with government in tackling socially ills which have direct impact on HIV/AIDS, GBVF as well as substance abuse.

The community of Dikgale appreciated the Department of Social Development for bringing much needed dialogue to their community.

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