



Media Statement

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Going back to basic in decreasing disaster risks

Rustenburg - Going back to basics by making sure that street lights are operational, storm water drainage pipes are in good condition and approved building constructions follow the stipulated standards is one of the ways that municipalities can deal with disaster risk effectively.

This is the message by the Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance, Andries Nel, at the disaster risk reduction celebration that took place in Rustenburg yesterday.

Deputy Minister joined North West Premier Supra Mahumapelo, Local Government and Human Settlements MEC Collen Maine and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction representative Sharon Rasu to address the older persons of Bojanala Platinum district as part of this year's International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction which is commemorated on 13 October.

In commemorating of the day the province of North West led by the Premier committed to adopt key principles for inclusive approach to disaster risk reduction. The province will ensure that: Specific requirements of older persons are understood by policy makers in municipalities and are responded to within all disaster risk reduction activities.

Older persons' capabilities and capacities are not overlooked due to their physical limitations but they are involved and encouraged to participation in community decision making.

Older person's knowledge, skills and wisdom is acknowledged, valued and engaged by government as an invaluable asset in disaster risk reduction.

This year's commemoration focuses on the older persons and the contribution they can make in the strategies to build disaster-resilient communities and general disaster risk mitigation.

According to the recent Census, 41% of the population in South Africa constitute older persons. General improvement of health care and access to government social services have resulted to improved life expectancy putting more pressure on governments to accommodate older persons in their policy development.

Disaster risk management practitioners in the country have recognised this as an opportunity to tap into the older persons' experience and knowledge of disaster risk management – a call supported by the government.

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