

## **For Immediate Release**

### **Media Release**

**03 December 2008**

The Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA) will be visiting the Blue Crane Municipality in Somerset East to present the plans that are designed to inspire environmental friendly economic activities in that region. In line with the call by National Government to intensify the fight against women and children abuse during and beyond the 16 Days of Activism on No Violence Against Women and Children, DEDEA resolved to take action by initiating, supporting and championing the activities that are designed to free women and children from men dependency.

Being thoughtful of the connection between poverty and abuse of women and children, the Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs sees itself as the major role player in combating this scourge of violence against women and children through its environmental friendly economic stimulating activities.

In this regard DEDEA, through Special Programmes Unit and Environmental Affairs Unit has seen a need to raise awareness, stimulate stakeholders through engagement and focusing on key areas into environmental sustenance and community development in the area. This initiative will contribute to the challenge of poverty and under-development as identified by various role-players.

Consequently, DEDEA through these two units resolved to undertake the following activities:

- linking government ,land owners in wild life management and communities in order to build capacity on sustainable utilization of biological resources
- launch 2010 Venison
- Launch the Departmental Youth Development and Empowerment Action Plan 2008-2014.

Somerset East is semi-rural and characterized by high rate of unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, prevalence of HIV and AIDS coupled with high levels of gender based violence. The rural lifestyle and its phenomenal nature contribute to the increase in the state of unemployment, migration of men leaving women to fend for themselves including their children.

Women and girls are the mostly affected by all the above-mentioned factors because of the imposing of the so called traditional, customary, values and practices. Gender based violence also arises from economic dependence which is a result of poverty , a culture of non savings, political, religious and cultural differences and is prevalent in all sectors of society. Violence is committed mostly by men of all status living in our communities irrespective of age groups and educational levels.

16 Days of Activism on No Violence Against Women and Children is an annual, United Nations (UN) endorsed awareness-raising campaign that begins on 25 November and ends on 10 December.

This campaign is but one element of Government's year-long, integrated and cross –sectoral drive to eliminate the abuse of women and children.

**VENUE** : **SOMERSET EAST** (Blue Crane Municipality)

**DATE** : **04 DECEMBER 2008**

**End**

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