



Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**TO ALL MEDIA  
FOR IMMEDIATE USE  
22 JUNE 2020**

### **STATUS OF THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE'S RESPONSE TO COVID19**

As of 21 June 2020, there were **15 751** people infected by the coronavirus in the Eastern Cape Province. Out of this number, **8035** people had recovered from the infection, with sadly **285** people losing their lives. We send our heartfelt condolences to the families of each and every one of our brothers, sisters, and elders we lost in the fight against this virus. We wish all these families strength during this hard time.

### **THE TOTAL NUMBER OF INFECTIONS IS BROKEN DOWN TO EACH METROPOLITAN AND DISTRICT MUNICIPAL AREA AS FOLLOWS:**

There are **763 Healthcare Workers** employed by both private and public sector that were infected by the virus, sadly, **we lost 24 of our Healthcare Workers**.

Nelson Mandela Bay Metro has **4706 people** infected, **2116 of these people recovered from infection**, sadly, **we lost 86 people**.

Buffalo City Metro has **3811 people** infected by the virus, **2039 of these people recovered from infection**, sadly, **we lost 46 people** lost.

Oliver Reginald Tambo District Municipality has **2515 people** infected by the virus, **1399 of these people recovered from infection**, sadly **we lost 65 people**.

Chris Hani District Municipality has **2080 people** infected by the virus, **1199 people recovered from infection**, sadly, **we lost 36 people**.

Amathole District Municipality has **1178 people** infected by the virus, **588 people recovered from infection**, sadly **we lost 20 people**.

For more information, please contact:  
Acting General Manager Provincial Communications - Mvusiwekhaya Sicwetsha  
Cell | 0829558833 or 062 594 5703  
email | [mvusiwekhaya@gmail.com](mailto:mvusiwekhaya@gmail.com) or [mvusi@icloud.com](mailto:mvusi@icloud.com)



Sarah Baartman District Municipality has **611 people** infected by the virus, **215 people recovered** from infection, sadly, **we lost 21** people.

Joe Gqabi District Municipality has **439 people** infected by the virus, **164 people** recovered from infection, sadly, **we lost 2** people.

Alfred Nzo District Municipality has **223 people** infected by the virus, **127 recovered** from infection, sadly, **we lost 1** person.

From this break down of each Municipal area, and based on the numbers of infections, it is clear that Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, Buffalo City Metro, Oliver Reginald Tambo District Municipality, Chris Hani District Municipality are the hotspot areas in our province.

## **RESPONSE TO THE VIRUS**

In responding to the virus, the province is intensifying efforts of **containing the virus** through mass screening, targeted testing of significant contacts, vulnerable individuals and those with symptoms, quarantine and isolation, mass education, awareness.

Secondly, we are **protecting vulnerable, poor individuals and communities** through provision of government services like provision of clean water, provision of sanitation services, shelter to the homeless, welfare support, psychosocial support to the relatives of the people we lost and to our frontline workers.

Thirdly, we are putting in place **Sustainable solutions** by investing into our health services, facilities and sustainable infrastructure.

Fourthly, we are **saving the provincial economy, securing the future of our province** through economic recovery plan, aligning our skills development to respond to the challenges created by the covid19 pandemic, ensuring relevant education and sustainable food security.

## **PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

Below we provide performance information according to the four strategic thrusts of our provincial campaign against coronavirus.

For more information, please contact:  
Premier's Spokesperson - Mvusiwekhaya Sicwetsha  
Cell | 0829558833 or 062 594 5703  
email | mvusiwekhaya@gmail.com or mvusi@icloud.com

## **CONTAINING THE VIRUS**

We are strengthening tracking and tracing as a key game changer to containing the virus through the use of a Telkom track and trace application. How it works is that when people who test for the virus provide us their significant contacts, we send them a sms notifying them of their test results, request them to be part of the system so that we can inform them and their contacts about the results of their contact without divulging identities. Contacts are also registered so that we allow them to report symptoms. Those showing symptoms are tested. This helps us to easily reach significant contacts and easily to quarantine, test and isolate.

We are in the process of finalising another technology from Vodacom that will allow us to access significant contacts of people who test positive so that we can reach-out to them. This system will notify us when a person who tests positive leaves the isolation and quarantine facility.

## **PART OF OUR APPROACH TO MANAGE HOTSPOTS IS TO DEVELOP:**

- a) A two weeks plan to track and isolate as well as account for all positive cases
- b) A two weeks plan to trace, screen and test all close contacts of each of the positive cases as well as quarantine
- c) A two weeks plan to establish Ward Based Rapid Response Teams in all Hotspots each with an assigned Health deployee and all linked to Police Stations
- d) Printing of flyers in vernacular on COVID19 to be circulated to all households (target 2 million A5 sized)
- e) Industrial theater on COVID19 played during prime time across radio stations
- f) Increase the inspectorate capacity of Labour, Health and Municipal Environmental Services (We may reassign people instead of employing new people)

## **UPDATE ON TRACING AND TRACKING:**

Alfred Nzo District has 33 Tracers, has traced 2253 significant contacts.  
Amatole District has 50 Tracers, has traced 1215 significant contacts.  
Buffalo City Metro has 19 Tracers, has traced 1906 significant contacts.  
Chris Hani District has 31 Tracers, has traced 219 significant contacts.

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Joe Gqabi District has 39 Tracers, has traced 1473 significant contacts.  
Nelson Mandela Bay Metro has 25 Tracers, has traced 3080 significant contacts.  
Oliver Reginald Tambo District has 70 Tracers, has traced 4447 significant contacts.  
Sarah Baartman District has 23 Tracers, and has traced 392 contacts.

**CORONAVIRUS LAB TESTS:** We have conducted a total of **133 790** lab tests in the province with **107 736 conducted** by the **National Health Laboratory Services**, **14 546 by Ampath**, **11 508 by Pathcare**.

The province is now prioritizing testing for those with a medical need and for clinical diagnosis, patients under Investigation, clinical diagnosis for patients with respiratory disease at health care services, testing for High Risk individuals, contact tracing for individuals exposed to positive patients, Health care workers exposed to positive patients.

We are focusing on targeted community screening and testing of people with symptoms according to case definition, at hotspots and outbreak areas, testing for symptomatic persons at hotspots.

We are also focusing on testing for key critical workers, screening for symptoms according to case definition for COVID-19, testing for symptomatic persons only. Surveillance testing for antibody testing to establish prevalence, workforce screening, asymptomatic random screening in hotspots.

**PROVIDING QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION FACILITIES:** With regards to quarantine facilities, the Department of Health has developed guidelines with minimum standards for a quarantine facility. These include, amongst others, a single room with a bed, lighting, well-ventilation, electricity, functional telephone system, support services- food, television, laundry services; sanitation services; and bathroom/Toilet. There are 169 private sector and public sector facilities with a combined total number of 5 460 beds that are readily available, with some being used for quarantine or isolation in the province.

However, most of the state-owned facilities which include closed schools do not meet the minimum standards set by the Department of Health. A Tripartite Agreement outlining responsibilities of the parties (DPWI, DOH, ECPTA) with respect to the utilisation of the ECPTA facilities for quarantine purposes has been developed.

On Tuesday, we will be receiving the field Hospital constructed by the VWSA Group through the funding from the German government. We appreciate this investment and support by the VWSA group and the German government.

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This is a responsible investment to help our people during this time of need. The facility for now will give us 1485 beds and when it is completed, it will give us 3300 beds. The provincial government will operate and manage the hospital, provide medicine and personnel for this hospital until March 2021.

**MASS EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION:** We will continue with our mass education and awareness campaign to change people's behaviour, encourage use of cloth masks at all times when people leave their homes, social distancing, promote hand washing and sanitising, compliance with the regulations by shops, malls, individuals and companies. This will continue being implemented on social media, using radio stations, community radio stations, newspapers, Bay TV, government's own communication platforms, billboards, advertising on taxis, busses and LED screens, distribution of flyers. Government will continue providing communities with updates about closure of public facilities like schools, hospitals, increase collaboration with social partners in the rollout of this campaign.

### **PROTECTING VULNERABLE AND POOR INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES**

**COMMUNITY SAFETY:** In response to the 73 Culpable Homicide cases, 236 murder cases, 1066 assault GBH cases, 135 attempted murder, 109 drunk and driving, 45 cases of people driving under the influence of liquor where accidents occurred, 64 cases of driving under the influence of liquor where no accident occurred, 291 rape cases reported, the provincial government is working with alcohol industry role players to increase mass awareness campaign aimed at reducing alcohol abuse. This is because use of alcohol has been found to be the causal factor in the commission of these crimes.

The South African Police Service is investigating all these cases where crime was committed and will ensure that any person who has committed crime will face the might of the law. Use of alcohol is no justification for any person to commit crime. Our priority is to prioritise protection of women and children, who are victims of these evil crimes.

**PROVIDING ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER:** We have installed 4 849 tanks to support hygiene protocols of preventing the spread of infections in water stressed communities, we have installed 684 tanks in informal settlements. We drilled 328 boreholes in Chris Hani, Blue Crane, Route, Makana, Kouga, Koukamma, Dr Beyer's Naude, OR Tambo, Amathole, Alfred Nzo, and Joe Gqabi municipalities to provide water to water stressed communities in these areas affected by drought.

**UPGRADING INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS:** Province has ring fenced R270 494 million for the upgrading of 115 informal settlements for 20/21 financial year. The two Metros are going to upgrade their Informal Settlements using the Urban Settlement Development Grant (USDG).

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Cell | 0829558833 or 062 594 5703  
email | mvusiwekhaya@gmail.com or mvusi@icloud.com

The ring-fenced amount is for the upgrading of informal settlements which is mainly provision of water, sanitation and security of tenure.

**PROVISION OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL SERVICES:** 164 Psycho-social Support Teams consisting of 1260 personnel, 29 Community Development teams with 501 members and 90 Volunteers from the National Development Agency have been established. About 685 people received psychosocial services across the Province.

Social Development has developed guidelines for the operationalization and the regularization (including legislative processes) of the shelters for the homeless during COVID-19 pandemic and post COVID-19 period. The number of people in the shelters for homeless people that were set up by provincial government and municipalities has gone from 760 to 400 as homeless people that left the shelters were re-united with their families.

We have developed protocols to provide assistance to people and families infected and affected by COVID-19 in the form of Professional Counselling and Psycho-social Support Services. Provision of counselling services on a social distance model of telephonic interviews as an alternative to face to face interaction is adopted. Family and community support include mass counselling services mostly using local community radio stations aimed at dealing with stigma and building social behavioral change in context of COVID-19.

**UPDATE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COVID-19 WARD RESPONSE TASK TEAM:** The establishment of the Covid-19 Ward Based Response Task Team has begun and a circular from the MEC of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to all the Executive Mayors has been issued outlining the role and institutional make-up of the ward based response teams. The Office of the Premier is working with CoGTA in reinforcing the ward-based war rooms building from these rapid response team to ensure integration of the fight against Covid19. In the Chris Hani and Alfred Nzo District municipalities work has begun. Today, the Director General will communicate with the Heads of Departments regarding additional support required for the implementation of this programme in terms of support like the use of available fieldworkers.

**UPDATE ON SCHOOL READINESS FOR RE-OPENING:** from the school readiness assessment report as of 19 June 2020, about 5037 schools were declared ready for re-opening, 67 are partially ready, 17 are not ready. At least 84 schools have not yet opened because 14 of them did not have water, 34 have no functional ablution facilities, 34 have a shortage of learner PPE, 2 special schools from Alfred Nzo East did not have PPE for support staff. The department is working on this matter and will provide updated information.

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**SCHOOLS AFFECTED BY COVID19:** 196 schools have closed across all 12 Districts of the province due to Covid-19 infections, 40 of these schools re-opened again after decontamination of the school took place, 132 schools remain closed and will open after three days of screening and decontamination is done.

**SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS WITH COMORBIDITIES & WITHOUT CONNECTIVITY IN ORDINARY SCHOOLS:** All schools approached their learner support programmes in line with their contextual and social factors and made use of platforms that are easily accessible to the learners and their parents such as: WhatsApp, Video Calls, Voice notes and SMS's and lessons in hardcopy.

Most schools downloaded support material from the ECDoE website, DBE website, You Tube, Facebook groups and Google Classroom website and provided it in hardcopy to learners without online facilities. Only 138 Quintile 4 and 5 schools with learners with comorbidities used various online support programmes such as (TEAMS, ZOOM, PowerPoint with voice over slides, email) to support their learners while only 67 Quintiles 1-3 schools with Learners with comorbidities used some form of online support such as (PowerPoint, WhatsApp and emails) to support their learners. Parents are encouraged to collect their learner support material from their respective schools and where possible the lessons are emailed to the parents.

## **SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS**

The provincial government is planning to build 1 field hospital per district and Metro with 500 beds per field hospital, giving us a combined total of 4000 medical beds throughout the province (this is not a normal bed but a medical bed with all required high care medical equipment), with a combined total of 800 high care beds.

The province has invested R222 million into the refurbishment and construction of healthcare facilities beyond the Covid19 pandemic towards readying the health care infrastructure for the National Health Insurance programme.

Government will closely monitor and account on progress for each health facility being renovated, consolidate a provincial plan for Funded Sustainable bulk water and sanitation infrastructure, and finalize the Provincial Climate Change response.

## **SAVING THE PROVINCIAL ECONOMY, SECURING THE FUTURE**

The province has developed an economic recovery plan which is aimed at saving the provincial economy from the hardship caused by covid19.

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email | mvusiwekhaya@gmail.com or mvusi@icloud.com

The objectives of the economic recovery plan is to increase the total supply and demand of goods and services in the provincial economy, increase employment levels through labour market absorption of critical occupations and demographic segments through re-skilling & upskilling, drive re-industrialisation through provincial catalytic projects & rural non-farm initiatives based on unique strengths & potentials of the province, Build Equitable & Inclusive Economy through SMMEs, Township Economies, Informal Sector, and Social Economy, mobilise public investment & create a sovereign wealth fund to boost public fiscus.

The province has received a request from some of the industrial manufacturers in the province to allow their engineers, technicians who are currently outside the country to fly into the province using chartered flights so that production at these manufacturing centres can resume. Premier Lubabalo Mabuyane is engaging national government on this matter. Working with national government, we will put into place protocols to manage this process to ensure all precaution is taken, testing is done and confirmed. Our focus is to ensure that we save our provincial economic from collapse by opening these factories, continuing with massive infrastructures projects in our province.

**UIF PAYMENTS:** The Unemployed Insurance Fund has paid R1.1 billion to the province benefiting 204 716 workers. In relation to complaints about employers not paying UIF money to the workers, the Department of Employment and Labour reported that the national department has tasked Auditors to look into this matter and that they are working with the Hawks to investigate criminality on this matter. The Eastern Cape Provincial Coronavirus Command Council welcomed this report.

**RE-OPENING AIRPORTS IN THE EASTERN CAPE:** The provincial government is working with National Department of Transport and the Airports Company of South Africa to have all the Airports in the province open for business. We received information that the airports were not covid19 complaint.

The opening of the airports is important for our efforts to save the provincial economy. The province is embarking on a process to relook its provincial economic development strategy as part of responding to the challenges brought by the covid19 pandemic, take advantage of positive lessons and opportunities that we are learning during this disaster.

We have initiated a process to support immediate livelihood interventions for informal traders, support for permits to trade through municipalities, institutional support for informal traders and support Regulatory compliance. The province will continue providing support to small businesses in all sectors of the province to access disaster relief grants from national government.

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We have assisted a number of small businesses to get these funds and national government has approved their allocations, with some having received their grant funding. This money will go a long way in supporting these small businesses from our province.

**Ends...**

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Cell | 0829558833 or 062 594 5703  
email | [mvusiwekhaya@gmail.com](mailto:mvusiwekhaya@gmail.com) or [mvusi@icloud.com](mailto:mvusi@icloud.com)

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