

MEDIA RELEASE:
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Tears of joy as KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo and local businessman hand over a house to poor Nkandla family

KWAZULU-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has called on leaders in the public and private sectors to intensify efforts to identify impoverished people and find ways to help them, as part of government's benevolent Operation Sukuma Sakhe programme.

Dr Dhlomo said this as he officially handed over a spacious two-bedroom house to the Masondo family at eMaKhabeleni, a deeply remote part of Nkandla today (10 October 2016).

Since the death of the family's matriarch, who was a pensioner, all unemployed 12 members of the Masondo family were left with a dilapidated mud-built homestead and no stable income.

MEC Dhlomo heard about the family's plight during a visit to create awareness about the dangers of child malnutrition in the area in December 2015. This followed reports that the rate of this scourge was high in the area. MEC Dhlomo was so moved by the poverty at the Masondo household that he sought help on behalf of the family.

Businessman Zamani Shongwe, of Inhlanzeko Project Management Services, who was part of the visit, pledged there and then to build the family a house.

Today, as the house was handed over, members of the Masondo expressed their heartfelt gratitude and were so overcome by the gesture that some of them openly cried tears of joy.

It was a happy occasion as the neighbouring community came out in numbers to congratulate the Masondo family. They sang and ululated throughout the ceremony.

Family member Nobuhle Masondo said: "Words cannot begin to describe how grateful we are to the MEC and to Inhlanzeko. We are a very poor family and we never imagined that we could have a wonderful house like this. May God bless you both, as well as anyone else who contributed to the building of this house. May you extend this kind of generosity to others."

Shongwe said he knew the moment he saw the family's circumstances that he had to do something.

"We often ask God to help us, but then we forget to extend a helping hand. When this opportunity presented itself, I felt it in my heart that I should intervene. With this house, we are giving hope to the family that things will get better."

MEC Dhlomo expressed his sincere thanks to Inhlanzeko, and hoped that many more families

elsewhere would benefit from similar donations.

“I’d like to encourage people in government to go out there and look for people in distress, so that we can find ways to help them. We can go to the private sector and ask for help on their behalf. It would really go a long way towards changing people’s lives,” he said.

MEC Dhlomo also encouraged the local community to make use of the local Malunga Clinic and get regularly screened for diseases, so that they can be detected early and treated.

<Captions>

Pic 1

KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo hands over the keys to an appreciative Nobuhle Masondo (in red jacket) and her brother Mbongeni Masondo (in black jacket), while local Inkosi Dlomo of eMaKhabeleni, Nkandla, looks on.

Pic 2:

Nobuhle Masondo is overcome with emotion as KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo hands over the keys to the family’s new home. Masondo’s brother Mbongeni looks on

Pic 3:

MEC Dhlomo with some members of the Masondo family.

ENDS

Issued by the KZN Department of Health
Contact Sam Mkhwanazi on 081 038 2193



