

BUSHBUCKRIDGE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

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PRESS STATEMENT

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO THE EDITOR

SUBJECT: BUSHBUCKRIDGE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY TO HOST A SANITARY TOWEL DIGNITY CAMPAIGN

In recognition of the role played by women in the struggle for mass emancipation, Bushbuckridge Local Municipality will be hosting a “**Sanitary Towel Dignity Campaign**” from the 24th -26th of August 2011. This campaign is targeted at 300 needy young women between the age of 20 to 40 and 700 indigent girl children. The broad objectives of the campaign are to:

- To restore the dignity and confidence of destitute women and girl children who miss opportunities and school lessons respectively for a week every month during their menstrual period due to lack of necessary accessories.
- To empower girl children with regard to their rights and responsibilities and defensive mechanism in order to avoid becoming victims of any abuse like : human trafficking , rape as some older men and even male educators take advantage by engaging in love relationships with these young girls who are still regarded as minors.
- To educate community especially women and girl children on issues pertaining to their health.

The municipality will give away 2800 packs of pads to poor and destitute women and girl children. By hosting a sanitary towel dignity campaign during women’s month, the municipality is determined to mobilize the community of Bushbuckridge to act against violence and abuse on women as well as to provide a healthy lifestyle for the girl children.

According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) one in ten school girls in Africa miss classes or drop out completely due to periods and substitute pads for less safe and less absorbent material such as rags, newspapers and bark. During menstruation, girls refuse to go to school because there are no appropriate sanitation facilities especially those from poor background who often use unhygienic sponges, tissue paper and newspapers during their menstrual period. A survey by Gender Links on the Girl Child has revealed that girls are absent from school due to menses for 4 to 5 days in every 28 days (a month) thereby losing three weeks of learning every school term.

The taboo nature of menstruation prevent girls and their communities from talking about and addressing the problem and the municipality hopes to raise awareness about this problem to eliminate the stigma. Visits will be made to identified high schools and home based care centres.

The Executive Mayor is calling upon the private sector to make a difference in the lives of young girls and women who are deprived and cannot afford sanitary towels. The media is invited to attend and be part of the campaign which is scheduled to take place as follows:

Bush-North

Date: 24th August 2011

Time and venue: 09h00 = Tladishi High School in Buffelshoek.
11h30= Mzimba high school in Lephong.
13h00= Zigna Home based Care in Ludlow.

Bush –Midlands

Date: 25 August 2011

Time and venue: 09h00 = Mkhweyantaba high School in Orinoco “A”.
11h00= Mawewe High School in Dumphries “A”.
13h00= foster care and widows Home Based Care in Newington.

Bush- South

Date: 26 August 2011

Time and venue: 09h00 = L.M Mokoena High school in Marite –Tsakani.
11h00= Mbandule High School in Ronaldsey.
12h30= Ronaldsey Home Based Care in Ronaldsey.

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