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# NEWSFLASH

A Commission for Gender Equality Newsletter

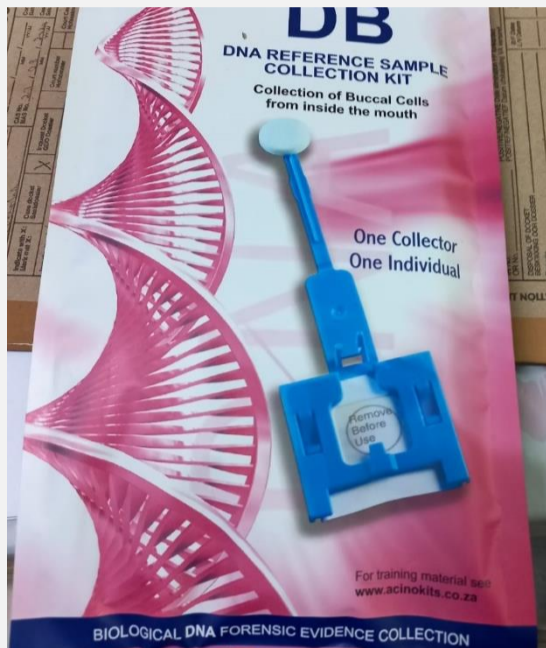
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## Could the overwhelming backlog of DNA tests contribute to the reliability of DNA test results?



Rape is a growing thorn in South Africa which needs to be prosecuted without fear, favour, or prejudice. The Minister of Police recently indicated that the system has been failing to prevent rape cases from occurring, hence more women and children continue to be abused. Rape cases are reported at various police stations within the country and arrests are made, although not all arrests amount to a conviction. For rape cases to be prosecuted and a conviction to be secured, reliable DNA is of utmost

importance because DNA evidence is the most reliable evidence employed in a trial to corroborate the evidence presented before a court. If the DNA test results come out negative despite having sufficient evidence, it may lead to acquittal or withdrawal of the case by prosecution at the court due to insufficient evidence. In 2022, the CGE held a meeting with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), wherein the NPA raised its concerns in respect of prosecution and securing convictions. It advised

that in instances of rape matters, DNA test results presented in recent times often come out negative, despite having sufficient evidence to secure a conviction. Securing convictions and sentencing perpetrators serves as a much-needed deterrence and discourages other potential perpetrators from committing rape. The prompt processing of DNA samples would lessen the doubt cast on DNA evidence and assist with securing more convictions for rape cases.

*The opinion piece was written by Ms Thembi Madalane, a Legal Officer at the Commission for Gender Equality.*

## CGE Completes School Monitoring Campaign in Mpumalanga



Commissioner Lindiwe Ntuli-Tloubatla and CGE staff in Mpumalanga completed the school monitoring campaign in the province this week.

This week, the CGE has assessed LM Mokoena Secondary School, Fairytale Day Care Centre, Mthobi Pre School and Siyakhula Primary school in Mpumalanga as part of The Back to School Monitoring Campaign.

The campaign was led by CGE Mpumalanga Commissioner Lindiwe Ntuli-Tloubatla who sat in a meeting with ECD Centre Managers and Schools Principal in their respective schools together with Portia Mtjali, Patricia Maphungela and Edna Caroto from the Department of Education in Ehlanzeni District. During a walk-about, Commissioner Ntuli-Tloubatla raised challenges that need to be addressed in some schools such as lack of water & cleanliness in the toilet area.

"We did a walk-about in Siyakhula Primary School and we realized that there is no water, and the toilets also need to be improved because they are not in good condition", she said.

The Commissioner has also applauded all monitored ECDs and Schools for cleanliness, a well organised feeding scheme, the ethics and professionalism some Managers and Principals carry and the discipline the schools maintain. Commissioner Ntuli-Tloubatla closed the Mpumalanga campaign by thanking all managers & school principals for allowing the CGE to visit their schools and centres and thanked the Mpumalanga Department of Education for supporting the oversight visits.

## Ensuring that police stations are equipped to support GBV victims



Acting Chairperson of the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), Ms Nomasonto Mazibuko, together with staff delegations, paid oversight visits to some North-West police stations this week. In Rustenburg, the CGE delegation met with Brigadier Pheto of the Rustenburg police station, the biggest station in the province. The station serves 7 informal settlements, over 4 urban areas & over 30 shopping centres. Between the period of April 2022 and January 2023, there's been a total of 88 sexual related crimes reported at the station. Of these, 66 are of rape, and 22

being sexual assault. The police station has a victim friendly facility that operates between 08:00 and 16:30 and does not offer overnight stay services. The Family, Child Protection and Sexual Offences unit is an independent entity based on the station operating from the facility. Survivors of GBV are transferred to Phokeng Centre where they are housed for 3 days. Survivors who do not require shelter are transported or offered transport fare to their destinations. The social workers express the frustration of shortage of shelters in the area.