



Press Release

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Immediate Release

SANEDI and MDA partner to provide mining communities with safer and energy efficient cooking solutions

Efforts to bring relief to South Africa's mining communities amid the turbulence of 2020 are bearing fruit for 200 families in large mining communities. The year is drawing to a close on a positive note as these communities received safer, more sustainable, and more cost-effective cooking solutions to see them through the coming months. The South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI) together with the Mineworkers Development Agency (MDA) handed over the first batch of 200 liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) stove systems to families in Virginia in the Free State, and Orkney in the North West Province on the 14th and 15th of December, respectively.

"When it became clear that the COVID-19 pandemic would have far-reaching and long-lasting negative effects on indigent urban and rural communities, the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy approached us for a relief solution for South Africa's hard-hit mining communities," explains SANEDI Interim CEO, Lethabo Manamela. "We worked with the MDA to assess community needs and realised that access to energy was a concern especially during lock down warranting attention."

While the MDA offers food parcels, a problem arises in the cooking process. The traditional fuels used by these communities are scarce and detrimental, resulting in indoor air quality challenges that can exacerbate the health, risks associated with the pandemic. LPG, on the other hand, is a clean and highly efficient cooking fuel. It cooks food fast, is easy to control, and has little impact on the ambient air quality. Furthermore, it produces no residue or particulate matter because it undergoes complete combustion.

Due to the COVID-19 limitations, the handover events held earlier this week were attended by a small number of community members, local leaders as well as executives from SANEDI and the MDA. Stove recipients were delighted at the news that their gas cylinders can be refilled three or four times as part of Government's offer to see them through a longer period.

One of the recipients, Selloane Mafisa of Virginia says, “I am so happy and relieved. I’ll now be able to cook for my grandchildren. I don’t know what to say, thank you SANEDI.”

“We are glad for the opportunity to work with the MDA on this initiative, of which this handover is just the beginning,” says David Mahuma, General Manager: Working for Energy Programme at SANEDI. “In partnering to bring relief to the country’s former mineworkers and their communities, we have supported many families in need.”

The MDA’s mandate is to create sustainable livelihoods in areas of endemic poverty. The agency works in tandem with partners such as NGOs and CSI programmes, focusing on providing food security, targeted support to emerging farmers and other job creation micro-enterprises. SANEDI is supporting these objectives through the development and use of renewable energy and efficiency systems that use natural and other available resources to enhance the energy optimisation of operations of these community-based establishments.

The MDA’s CEO Mr Tshimane Monteodi says, “This distribution goes a long way in our quest to achieve long term sustainable development through our food security and poverty alleviation programme. As this is on top of our earlier 1300 food parcel and more than 7000 seed distributed to our beneficiaries country wide.”

“SANEDI looks forward to further providing alternative energy access to needy South Africans thereby progressing the vision of the DMRE and enabling the MDA to help to address a wider range of community concerns,” concludes Mahuma.

Ends 569 words

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About SANEDI

The South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI), established by the Government, directs, monitors and conducts applied energy research to develop innovative, integrated solutions to catalyse growth and prosperity in the green economy. It drives scientific evidence-driven ventures that contribute to youth empowerment, gender equity, environmental sustainability and the 4th Industrial Revolution, within the National Development Plan (NDP), through consultative, sustainable energy projects. For more information, go to www.sanedi.org.za.