

## **MAYOR PROMOTES ARBOR MONTH**

**MOKOPANE:** Many countries across the globe recognize the importance of educating youths about the benefits of keeping the environment as green as possible. With this in mind, many countries celebrate Arbor Day once a year-a day on which trees are planted and emphasis is placed on the importance they play in the circle of life. In South Africa, Arbor is celebrated for an entire week.

The Mogalakwena Municipality Mayor's representative Cllr Malesela Mokwele who was later joined by the Mayor, Her Worship Cllr Andrina Matsemela led councillors as they visited six schools within the municipality to celebrate Arbor week.

They embraced this by planting 30 trees in total, with 5 trees per school, while other trees were distributed to other neighbouring schools.

In his address Cllr Malesela Mokwele who is the Electrical Services Chairperson briefly said, "Remembrance tree planting- this theme was aimed at encouraging communities and individuals to plant trees in memory of their loved ones and individuals who contributed to community development and nation building."

"Arbor week is a national activity that is celebrated widely in our country. The Department of Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry (DAFF) is an official custodian of Arbor Week. Other stakeholders that include public institutions, government, private sector and civil society hold their own events. DAFF provides promotional material and themes for annual celebrations. Furthermore, DAFF also provides information on selected trees of the year," added Mokwele.

Mokwele indicated that Arbor week had been used in the promotion and launching of major greening initiatives such as new recreational parks and tree planting in low cost housing.

"Trees absorb carbon dioxide and turn it into oxygen. The natural carbon dioxide cycle keeps a balance in the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in our atmosphere. But our actions and behaviour cause changes which upset this natural balance" Mokwele said.

Mokwele added that the destruction of rainforests and cutting down of other forests also affects the balancing act.

"Trees play a vital role in both rural and urban areas. They are needed to enrich and anchor soil, to maximise water supplies, to beautify and humanise townships and urban areas and to provide shade and shelter. This greening initiative will not only green our municipality or schools but also help us combat climate change and clean our air."

Learners and educators were excited and were also part of the activities.