

MEDIA STATEMENT

Issued by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities

Attention: Journalists and News Editors

Wednesday: 25 September 2024

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MINISTER CHIKUNGA PASS ON WORDS OF SOLACE TO THE VICTIMS OF ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS.

Pretoria: The Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities, Sindisiwe Chikunga, extends her heartfelt condolences to the family of the victim affected by the adverse weather conditions that impacted parts of the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces over the weekend.

"We are deeply saddened to learn that a woman lost her life to hypothermia due to these unprecedented weather conditions. She was a passenger in a taxi travelling from Johannesburg to KwaZulu-Natal," said Minister Chikunga. We commend the exemplary selflessness and solidarity shown by South Africans who came to each other's aid in what were life-threatening circumstances.

South Africa is experiencing unusual climate change-related incidents, marked by an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, as well as rising mortality rates. The severity of these events continues to disproportionately affect marginalised communities—those who often lack the resources to cope—most of whom are women and persons with disabilities.

While this is a global phenomenon, the impact of climate challenge-related disasters is not uniform. Recent research published by the World Bank shows that "across the globe, women and persons with disabilities experience mortality rates up to four times higher in natural disasters than those without".

"We express our condolences to those who have lost their loved ones, and we urge all South Africans to closely monitor weather reports to avoid areas projected to experience extreme weather conditions," concluded Minister Chikunga.

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