

## **Siyahlola Campaign Goes to North West to Meet with CHWs**

By Karla Witbooi

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On 6 February 2021, a meeting was held with Community Healthcare Workers (CHWs) from the North West province at Ikageng section in the JB Marks Local Municipality. There were about 11 CHWs who attended the meeting, including Forum organisers, North West CHWs and CHWs from the Eastern Cape.

CHWs in the North West are currently busy with a campaign for permanent employment, since they are still being called volunteers by the Health Department. Last year, in July 2020, after seeing Gauteng CHWs victory, CHWs from North West felt that it is only fair that permanent employment should be given for CHWs in the entire nation.

Besides that they want to be permanent there are many things that they are struggling with as CHWs. Like other provinces, Eastern Cape and North West CHWs also have the problem of a lack of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), and there are cases of COVID-19 in their clinics. CHWs from Joubertina in the Sarah Baartman District of the Eastern Cape also reported in the meeting that there is a CHW who recently lost his life from a COVID-19 related illness.

North West CHWs told the meeting that they are being misled by unions who promise to help them to be permanent employees. The unions also say they are the ones who won the permanent employment of the CHWs in Gauteng.

The comrades were provided with petitions for them to get signatures of support and mobilise other CHWs in the area and in all other regions. The CHWs agreed to go mobilise and collect petitions. A follow up meeting will be held later in February 2021.

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