



Inhlabamkhosi

FREE



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STATE OF THE PROVINCE ADDRESS 2013 - GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE PROVINCE



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R30m set aside to prioritise water supply and sanitation to the poor

The Mpumalanga government is to spend more than R30m in providing water and sanitation to its residents. During his state of the province address Premier David Mabuza said that a project aimed at providing and improving water supply to communities, schools and health facilities within four local municipalities in Mpumalanga that do not currently have municipal water supply at a budget of R7.5m. He said that of the many service delivery challenges experienced by our municipalities, access to water top the list and the government, made a commitment to attend to the persistent problem of bulk water and sanitation infrastructure.

“Water delivery to power stations is planned by end April 2013 and opportunity exists for access to Kriel town from the Komati Water Scheme Augmentation Project. An estimated cost of R25m for the pipeline from Komati to Kriel would be spent,” he said. Mabuza said access to basic service “by all our people is of paramount importance because we are a caring government”.

On health the premier said they had developed a comprehensive improvement plan to respond to urgent challenges confronting health institutions, especially hospitals. “We will finalise the appointment of suitably qualified CEOs in all hospitals by the end of April this year. We will ensure that we decentralise management and decision making

processes to the CEOs of hospitals, with the districts and the head office playing a monitoring and quality assurance role,” he said.

Mabuza said they would also complete all outstanding minor repairs and maintenance by the end of June 2013. In this regard, they would set up rapid implementation teams to attend to all minor repairs. The premier said he was encouraged that grade 12 performance increased from 47.9% in 2009 to 70% in 2012. He said that in 2013-14, the province will implement a comprehensive improvement plan intended to provide targeted support to schools that performed below 50%.

Mabuza said their intervention speaks to the need to improve our output and quality of passes in mathematics and physical science. “We are concerned that the majority of our learners do not make mathematics and science their first subject choices. In some instances, learners are being discouraged from taking these subjects,” he said.

Mabuza also lashed out against people who abuse women and children and said their acts had no place in society.

“The domestic violence perpetrated against women and girl children require that all the citizens of the province take a stand and say NO TO ABUSERS.” He said that society needed to address some of the root causes of these crimes such as poverty, unemployment and inequality, particularly youth unemployment. “As a province, we shall work with all law enforcement agencies and communities to take the fight against crime back to



Mpumalanga government to spend R30million on safe clean water.

the door steps of criminals,” he said. On job creation Mabuza said they have to work hard and grow the provincial economy at a rate of between 5% and 7% per annum so that the target of 719 000 new jobs by 2020 is realised. Mabuza also admitted that his government had not fared well in human settlement. He attributed the problems to the challenges of leadership and management, corruption and poor forward planning.

“Fortunately, we have already started to address some of the weaknesses that were revealed by our assessment report. This includes, among other things, strengthening the leadership of the department, tightening administrative systems and processes, particularly in the supply chain area.” Mabuza said they were prioritising to complete all the incomplete houses within the next 100 days in the 2013-14 financial year.

Pushing for better healthcare



Mpumalanga government set to overhaul health facilities in the province.

The Mpumalanga government is to demolish old hospitals that pose a danger to patients and staff. Premier David Mabuza said they were investing a large proportion of resources to deliver quality health care to the citizens of the province. “We are doing this to ensure that our healthcare system is able deliver quality healthcare to all, including the poor and vulnerable sectors of our society.” Mabuza said their assessment of hospital performance indicated that there were hospitals that are so old and dilapidated that they pose a serious danger to the lives of patients they are meant to help. “Any form of continued maintenance will constitute a serious waste of resources. We have come to the conclusion that these hospitals need to be completely demolished and reconstructed,” he said.

Mabuza said they will establish maintenance teams in all hospitals to ensure that facilities are maintained on a regular basis “We will ensure that hospitals are supported through the acquisition of modern equipment required in the provision of quality health care. Our hospitals have to keep with modern technologies in the medical field,” he said. Mabuza said they were at the point of no return. “We have to act, and the time to act is now. We have to be bold and confront these challenges head-on, and inspire confidence among our people that we have the political will and commitment to change this situation around. “We have developed a comprehensive improvement plan to respond to these urgent challenges confronting our health institutions, especially our hospitals.”

Mabuza said for them to succeed they had to do things differently and there has to be a strong sense of urgency, agility and renewed sense of commitment to deliver on these massive projects within a short space of time.

Pulling up our socks in providing shelter

Mpumalanga government is to pull up its socks when it comes to provision of houses after not performing well last year. Premier David Mabuza said integrated human settlements embody the national vision of promoting non-racialism and prosperous communities.

“As government, we have not fared well in this area of our work. On a number of targets that we have set for ourselves, we are saddened to report that we are lagging behind,” he said. Mabuza said their poor performance could be attributed to, among other things, the challenges of leadership and management, corruption and poor forward planning.

“Fortunately, we have already started to address some of the weaknesses that were revealed by our assessment report. This includes, among other things, strengthening the leadership of the department, tightening administrative systems and processes, particularly in the supply chain area,” he said.

The premier said despite challenges, they managed to build 1 027 houses at Klarinet in Emalahleni local municipality, including the provision of the bulk services.

“Through our partnership with Absa we have managed to secure and transferred 80 bonded houses as part of the GAP market,” he said.

Mabuza said through the Premier’s Special Housing Initiative, in partnership with the private sector, 147 houses were built for families living in abject poverty. He said that in the 2013-14 financial year, they are going to complete all the incomplete houses within the next 100 days. Mabuza said they were also going to move with speed to finalise the outstanding work on the establishment of integrated human settlements in Klarinet, Emakhazeni, Dipaliseng and Thaba Chweu. He said they will also focus on spatial planning and integrated development planning for Umjindi, Nkomazi, Msukaligwa and Mbombela and speed up and finalise the implementation of the people housing programme (PHP) in all the CRDP municipalities. - **Luzuko Pongoma**



Mpumalanga registered a high rate of investigating corruption and closing of related cases.

The Mpumalanga government has declared war on corruption and crime

Speaking at his state of the province address, Premier David Mabuza said that they are going to work closely with society to get rid of women and child abuse. Mabuza said the fight against crime and corruption remain priorities in the work of the government. “The ANC-led government continues to intensify its fight against fraud and corruption in all fronts. Our gloves are off for those implicated in fraud and corruption,” he said.

Mabuza said according to the results of the study conducted by the Public Service Commission released in August 2012, Mpumalanga registered the highest success rate in terms of investigation and closing of the reported cases.

“The provincial government, working in partnership with law enforcement agencies, responds to cases mostly reported to the Presidential Hotline and the Public Service Commission Anti-Fraud and Corruption Hotline. On average, we are handling about 20 cases a month,” he said.

Mabuza said in cases of officials doing business with government while in the employ of the state, they are progressing well. In the 2012-13 financial year alone, about 334 officials were charged for doing business with the provincial government

and municipalities. Sanctions ranging from final written warnings to recovery of earnings were imposed. About 56 officials were charged with fraud and corruption. The majority of these officials were dismissed, demoted or had salaries docked. To show its seriousness in dealing with challenges, the provincial government has taken a decision that no public servants will be permitted to do business with government any more, effective as March 1, 2013.

Those who have chosen to be business people in their own right, let them ship out of government and join the business sector. “Our commitment towards ensuring all South Africans are secure and feel safe in their homes, their places of work, their communities and in their own streets cannot be overemphasised.”

“The domestic violence perpetrated against women and girl children require that all the citizens of the province take a stand and say NO TO ABUSERS!”

“In addition, we need to address some of the root causes of these crimes such as poverty, unemployment and inequality, particularly youth unemployment.” Mabuza said, among other things, they would roll-out a 365 days programme of No Violence against Women and Children in the 2013-14 financial year.



Premier David Mabuza promises to speed up and finalise the implementation of the people housing programme in CRDP municipalities



Disaster management to be beefed up

Premier David Mabuza has assured residents who were affected by floods that his government would deal with infrastructural damage. During his address, Mabuza said the province remained prone to flooding and disasters.

“While we were still attending to major infrastructure damages during the heavy rains of January 2012, the province was hit again by floods in the same month this year,” he said.

He said Bushbuckridge, Nkomazi, Msukaligwa, Mkhondo and the Mbombela municipalities were highly affected by the floods. “In the 2013-14 financial year we are going to deal with the entire infrastructure affected by the flood disaster and ensure that it returns to normal functionality.”

Mabuza said they would look at mechanisms to improve the disaster management early warning system to timeously warn communities of potential flood situations. He said the early warning system would be linked to local municipalities. “This will include the development of appropriate plans and strategies to mitigate the risks of disasters as part of adaption measures to climate change,” he said. Mabuza said rains in the province had caused flooding of certain communities, infrastructure damage to schools, clinics, roads, bridges and, in certain instances, communities were disconnected from their day-to-day activities.

He said the province experienced 22 fatalities during the period of December 2012 and January 2013. Mabuza conveyed condolences to all the families who lost their loved ones.



Disaster management is one of the priorities for Premier David Mabuza.

Province to boost local government

The Mpumalanga government is to work harder to improve the situation in municipalities in the province. Premier David Mabuza admitted in his state of the province address that the majority of municipalities in the province were not healthy despite the province's support in implementing the Turnaround Strategy.

“Our municipalities continue to struggle on the issues of planning, delivery of basic services, financial viability, leadership and management, and public participation,” he said. Mabuza said that ward committees and the work of community development workers were also a cause for concern.

“In our recent assessment of our municipalities, we have agreed, as a collective, to work even harder in our quest of turning local government around and change people's experience of services and governance,” he said. Mabuza said that local government was an important sphere of government.

It was at the coalface of service delivery and its capacity to discharge this mammoth task was critical. The premier said that as the provincial government, they had an obligation, through intergovernmental relations, to support the sphere of government so that the delivery of service to people was efficient and effective. Mabuza said the province would continue to support municipalities in all those areas where they had exhibited weaknesses.

“To this end, we have agreed that all municipalities have to prioritise the implementation of the Programme of Action for Delivery Agreement on Outcome 9 and Local Government Turnaround strategy in the 2013/14 financial year,” he said. He said the turnaround strategy would include the implementation of bulk water and sanitation infrastructure for the Mbombela, Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge, Mkhondo, Chief Albert Luthuli, Emalahleni, Dr JS Moroka and Thembisile Hani areas.

The turnaround strategy would also provide support in the expansion of access to basic services and eliminate backlogs.

It would also implement the integrated municipal support plan and enhance financial viability. Mabuza said they would also implement the community works programme. - **Luzuko Pongoma**

Working with traditional leaders

The Mpumalanga government will work closely with traditional leaders to create social cohesion and nation building said Premier David Mabuza. Speaking at the state of the province address, Mabuza also preached unity in the province. He said the provincial government continued to work closely with the institution of traditional leaders and continued to cherish their role in the struggle against colonialism and freedom. “The role of traditional leaders in the work of government cannot be overemphasised, particularly in the areas of health, education, rural development and social cohesion and nation building. We really appreciate the good working relations that we have established with the house,” he said. Mabuza said they were serious on the matters of settling traditional leadership disputes and claims. “The provincial committee on traditional leadership disputes and claims has processed 29 cases that I have considered so far and two were found to be valid. I have now given full recognition of the traditional communities of Yende and Mahlobo under Mkhondo local municipality as part of the restoration of our traditional communities,” he said.

Mabuza said he appointed two additional members to strengthen the committee so that this work could be expedited and all cases could be concluded by 2015. “We wish to once more appeal to all our communities to cooperate with the process and respect its outcome whether it favours you or not,” he said. Mabuza said that in unity, it was agreed to begin a journey of building the ideal society as envisaged in the Freedom Charter, a society wherein democracy, liberty and respect for human rights will reign supreme. “We agreed that there are three interrelated challenges that are standing between us and our destiny, that is, the challenges of abject poverty, high level of unemployment and the inexpressible inequalities so pervasive in all levels of our society,” he said. Mabuza said it was agreed that unless challenges were addressed head-on, the envisaged future society would be nothing but a mirage. The premier also congratulated the new executive of the Mpumalanga provincial house of traditional leadership led by Kgosi Mokoena and the local houses for their successful elections.



SOPA 2013 Golf Day Challenge.



Premier's Golf Day attracts sponsorships

The Premier's Golf Day event once again attracted sponsorship and golfers who made the event a success on Saturday last week. The event was held at White River Country Club golf course from sunrise and culminated in a prize giving ceremony in the afternoon.

This event is Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza's brainchild, and has been held annually, immediately after the State of the Province (SOPA) address and the opening of the provincial legislature.

Just like it has been happening over the years, the event attracted the interest of golfers, most of whom are business people, and sponsors.

"The aim of this event is to raise funds. It is to offer an opportunity to business and private individuals in the province to contribute into the Premier's Bursary Fund and other courses aimed at bettering the lives of those less fortunate among us,"

said Mpumalanga Province's Director General, Dr. Nonhlanhla Mkhize in her opening remarks during the prize giving ceremony of the golf day. Ithemba Communications' Managing Director was elated to have been part of the event.

"Golf is a very relaxed sport and very enjoyable. We appreciate the Premier's initiative which offers us time away from our hectic business schedules to away from the noise," said an excited... ..also aired his sentiments about Premier Mabuza's State of the Province Address which he had delivered the previous day.

"It was a good speech. Very promising and gives hope to us as small businesses. We welcome the Premier's resolve not to allow public servants to be business people at the same time. His emphasis on paying service providers within 30 days gives us hope that our business will thrive, and survive cash flow woes which end up getting us out of business. We will

be able to create new much needed jobs, retain those already created and grow the economy of the province. To Mabuza we say, Aluta Continua!" he laughed.

Mr. Peet Rabie, a professional golfer who took part in the event was also equally excited.

"It is an exciting event. We are enjoying ourselves here," smiled Rabie. He added that his wish would be to see the Premier's Gold Day held more often. Premier Mabuza's absence for the day's first tee, as would have been expected was conspicuous. He would be part of the Golf Day proceedings after a tour he undertook with government officials, politicians and members of the media to some destinations in the province that included the Kruger National Park.

Sponsors which also made the day a success were Eastview BMW, Standard Bank, Multichoice, KwaMahlaba Connect, Makro Nelspruit, Ingwenyama Conference and Sports

Resort, SAB, Nedbank, Sembcorp Silulumanzi, The Golfers Club and Xerox among others.

Dr. Mkhize appreciated the contribution made by the sponsors, but added that the Premier would be glad if more sponsors would come aboard and contribute into the Premier's Bursary Fund.

"There are many students from disadvantaged backgrounds at tertiary institutions country-wide who are waiting to have their outstanding fees paid in order for them to continue their studies. Business can assist in this regard in an effort to grow the province's skills base and its economy," said Mkhize.

Winners of the golf tournament received prestigious prizes with compliments from the sponsors. The sponsors committed to contributing more to the Premier's fund in October this year when the event will be held once again at a venue still to be announced.

Premier's Bursary Fund boosted by SOPA Golf Day

An amount of R170 000, which will go towards the Premier's Bursary Fund, was raised during the annual Premier's Golf Day, which was held a day after the State of the Province Address. Held once again at the magnificent golf course at the White River Country Estate, this year's affair, which saw business individuals, officials from both government and the private sector sweating it out for a noble cause, grew

just a step further comparing to last year's event.

This year's contributions, which stand to benefit over 20 tertiary institutions, managed to surpass last year's proceeds, which were donated to Tsembeletfu Primary School. According to the director general of the province, Dr Nonhlanhla Mkhize, there are already students or beneficiaries in different institutions waiting for their grants and fees to be paid and this

money will go straight to them.

"Well, we wanted to raise more money because there are many young people in various tertiary institutions depending on it," she said. She then pointed out that some sponsors who participated during the golf day, promised to raise more funds to help cover all the intended beneficiaries of this noble cause.

Before this bursary fund was established, Mabuza used his own

money to sponsor young people from the province to further their studies at tertiary institutions.

This year's proceeds were sponsored by Xerox, Standard Bank, Nedbank, Sasol, Sembcorp Silulumanzi, SAB Miller, DStv Multichoice, Eastview BMW and Kwamahlaba Connect, Ingwenyama Conference and Sports Resort, Emnotweni Casino, Makro and Golfers Club.



Futurist Budget for the people of Mpumalanga

MEC for Finance, Mr Madala Masuku tabled what could arguably be termed futuristic budget at the Provincial Legislature on Tuesday, 19 March 2013.

Drawing inspiration from one popular poet, MEC Masuku took the people into confidence about the economic challenges and how each one can contribute in making the objective of better live possible.

He informed the people that the government is truly committed to improving their lives, including through taking tough in the process. "We did not ask for the money from those who had it, but we borrowed so that children may be able to access ECD centres and their brothers and sisters go to secondary schools and parents would have access to clinics and go to decent hospitals when they are ill.

"We borrowed because we wanted to provide seeds so that there may be more pumpkins, vegetables and mealies cobs in the households of our people in Bushbuckridge, Nkomazi, Dr Albert Luthuli, said MEC Masuku. MEC Masuku said that the budget addresses the socio-economic challenges facing people of Mpumalanga as outlined by the Premier during his State of Provincial Address (SOPA) on the 01 March this year.

MEC told members of the media that the provincial government considers the needs of the people before the finalisation and approval of the budget. "We start with what people need and then allocate funds according to the relevancy each department to carry out mandate to assist in meeting achievements societal needs," Masuku elaborated.

"We believe that this budget is after all a tool for growth and development, we must therefore use Provincial government expenditure to contribute to the reduction of the relatively inequality, poverty and unemployment of our province," MEC said.

MEC Masuku said the department would put in place measures to ensure "a sustained monitoring, accountability and adherence to financial management legislation in the Province to ensuring that Departments' plans adhere to the budget commitments.

2013/2014 BUDGET FOR THE

MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The Provincial Government Income The 2013/14 fiscal year provincial total receipt amounting R33.7 billion is drawn from the following sources: The Provincial Revenue for the 2013/14 fiscal year amounts to R702.3 million. Provincial equitable share of R27.2 billion; Conditional Grants to the amount of R5.7 billion

ALLOCATIONS PER VOTE

The above priorities have been incorporated in the various Departments and allocated with resources to continue with programmes started already, as well as cater for operational, remunerative and other administrative costs.

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

The Office of the Premier is allocated R200.4 million to fund amongst others; establishment of dedicated unit to coordinate and foster youth development and Rapid Implementation Unit as part of the effort to speed up delivery in the Province.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

The Budget for the Provincial Legislature amount R243.4 million to enhance oversight of departments, deepen democracy through constituency work. The amount include R17.5 million that has been earmarked for, amongst others, enhancing democracy by deepen democracy through increased contact with constituencies to provide more service and clarity to voters in these trying times.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

The total amount of R266.8 million is allocated to Department of Finance to implement various financial management and governance improvement programmes.

CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS

The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs is allocated a total budget of R425.9 million to facilitate and co-ordinate inter-governmental structures; provide sustainable integrated service delivery and to support the traditional system of governance in the Province. The allocation includes R61.4 million to

fund water infrastructure and R5 million for the appointment of 127 Community Development Workers (CDWs) who have already undergone training.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration receives R1.05 billion to amongst others, continue the roll out of CRDP and initiate the processes of establishing the Fresh Produce Market.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

The Department Economic Development, Environment and Tourism is allocated R821.5 million for amongst others to promote economic development through investment promotion, SMMEs and the cooperatives development, well as promoting tourism, environmental management and heritage preservation programmes.

The budget includes R121.8 million as a baseline improvement towards the Public Entities to enable the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA) and the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) to drive strategic economic, tourism, biodiversity as well as regulation of Gambling activities in the Province. R6.6 million is also allocated for operationalization of the Mpumalanga Liquor Authority Act to allow for greater regulatory control and the suppression of over proliferation of Liquor Outlets and social dilemmas related to alcohol abuse.

EDUCATION

Total spending on Education will amount to R14.8 billion in 2013/14. The budget makes provision for implementation of various strategic interventions to increase access to and improve the education outcomes from grade R to Matric level. Mpumalanga Regional Training Trust is allocated R98 million to increase training and skills development opportunities for young people in the Province.

PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Expenditure on Public Works, Roads and Transport will be R3.9 billion for implementation of the province's infrastructure improvement. The

budget includes an amount of R61 million dedicated to improvement of roads and street access in selected rural municipalities and R808 million for the rehabilitation of the Coal Haulage. The department also receives R111.8 million for the Devolution of Property Rates which now forms part of the Equitable Share allocation funding.

COMMUNITY SAFETY, SECURITY AND LIAISON

The Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison is allocated R841.7 million to expand integrated social crime prevention initiatives on rural safety, including mobilising communities towards a safer Mpumalanga. The budget includes funding for the construction of Traffic College.

HEALTH

The Department of Health receives R8.084 billion for improvement of health profile of the province as outlined in the priorities. A special allocation of R27.5 million over the MTEF is contained in the allocation for the rollout of quicker and more accurate diagnostic tests for tuberculosis.

CULTURE, SPORT AND RECREATION

R351.8 million is allocated to the Department of Culture, Sports and Recreation to promote inclusive sport, enhance social cohesion and promote the rich heritage of the Province. This budget provides for the construction of Cultural Hub and High Altitude Training Centre.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The allocation to the Department of Social Development is R1.1 billion. A special allocation of R9.7 million has been made to this Department to absorb an increased number of social work graduates funded through the social work scholarship programme. The budget also includes an amount of R8.09 million to support the NGO sector that is currently experiencing financial challenges.

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Human Settlement is allocated R1.3 billion towards development of integrated Human Settlements, deal with informal settlements and complete PHPs in CRDP municipalities.



Mpumalanga infrastructure master plan underway.

Mpumalanga is on course with infrastructure master plan

The Mpumalanga Government is re-aligning the way infrastructure in the province is being implemented and maintained. This after the Mpumalanga Provincial Executive Council directed the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport to embark on a process to develop the Mpumalanga Infrastructure Master Plan (MIMP). The Department appointed CSIR Built Environment in December 2011 to assist with the development of the MIMP.

The MIMP is based on a multi-disciplinary study dealing with the full spectrum of infrastructure, including amongst others, basic infrastructure, social infrastructure and economic

infrastructure intended to unlock economic development potential within the province. It also aims to give guidance on the additional infrastructure required to align planned projects within the overall strategic goals of economic growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation.

It is envisaged that the MIMP will ensure that there is value for money, proper planning based on needs analysis and job creation at the same time. Speaking to Mr Morake Morolo who is the Deputy Director General for Public Infrastructure, he said "We will no longer work in tantrums when we build infrastructure. The MIMP will allow us as government to work together with private sector, district

and local municipalities where we are going to for example, zoom into an area like for instance Kanyamazane. Before we put up infrastructure we are going to conduct an analysis research, look at the available infrastructure like schools, the condition of the road and so forth. We are then going to look at other aspects like the population ratio. If the area has for example a population of about 15 000 people, then we will only build a clinic, if the area has about 50 000 people then we will build a hospital. The number of people in the area will also play a vital role to determine the number of health facilities we must build in the area. If for example it is a deep rural area, then a school with a bodying school is needed so that government can also

save on transport costs that are where value for money becomes relevant". In November 2012 the Department presented a final draft to Exco where the Department was instructed to conduct thorough consultations with all relevant sectors. The various sectors that need to be consulted included amongst others industries like SAPPI, TSB, Mining housing, freight transport, local and districts municipalities. The discussions were based on getting their views and inputs on the MIMP in order to agree on what should be covered. The consultations were also used as awareness campaigns to inform the various sectors of what government intends to do. The consultations have since been finalised and final approval is awaited from EXCO before implementations phase.

Mpumalanga launches 45 scholar transport buses



MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport Dikeledi Mahlangu at the scholar transport buses launch.

The MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport in Mpumalanga, Dikeledi Mahlangu officially launched the scholar transport buses on the 6th of February 2013 at AJ Swannepoel stadium at Ermelo in the Msukaligwa Local Municipality. The MEC was accompanied by the Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District Municipality Cllr Mishack Nhlathathi, Executive Mayor of Msukaligwa Local Municipality Cllr Siphongwe and the Department of Education District Head in Gert Sibande Ms Nokuthula Mthethwa. More than 1500 learners and parents from the schools which will be benefitting from the also attended to witness the official launch of the pilot project which aims to ferry learners who travel more than five kilometres to school on foot. After 5 years the buses will be handed over to government. This is the first of its kind and will benefit government by saving costs and expenditure on scholar transport. All the buses are fitted with safety belts. The buses range between 65 and 75 seaters each. More buses will be rolled out to other areas in the Gert Sibande District and Bohlabela Local Municipality. During her keynote address MEC Mahlangu requested parents to play a role in ensuring that the buses are well looked after. "The buses that we are launching today will go a long way in ensuring that your children travel

to school safely that is if you take good care of them. We will also play our role to ensure that we monitor the buses by checking whether they deliver the children to school on time. It is also your responsibility as parents to ensure that your children arrive at the bus stop on time because when your child arrive late the bus will not wait for him or her and compromise the early arrival to school of the other learners" said MEC Mahlangu. Gert Sibande District Executive Mayor Cllr Mishack Nhlathathi said he is excited that the launch took place in his District municipality. "I thank the Department for piloting the project in this area and I believe it will go a long way in helping a large number of children to get to school safely" said Cllr Nhlathathi. Ms Nokuthula Mthethwa who is the Department of Education District Head in Gert Sibande thanked the Department for the job well done. "It is very good to see that many learners will now go to school and arrive on time. We believe that the level of attendance will also improve." One of the learners who attended the launch is Sibusiso Nhlebeza from Ithafa Comprehensive School. He also extended his excitement about the buses. "What I like about them is that they look comfortable and I will now enjoy my trip to school. I cannot wait to get on the buses to feel the comfort."

Mpumalanga education rises again

The Mpumalanga Department of Education held its 2012 Announcement of Grade 12 results on Thursday, 03 January 2013 at the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality in Middleburg, Piensaarsdam Lodge.

The prestigious event was graced by government officials who included amongst others the Honourable Speaker of the Provincial Legislature, Honourable SW Lubisi, Members of the Executive Committee, sponsors of the event and also in attendance was the most important persons of the day, the top class of 2012 accompanied by their parents and guardians.

In her statistical report the MEC for Education, Mrs Reginah Mhaule, stated that Mpumalanga had registered a 5.2 % improvement. The class of 2012 stands at a 70% pass rate compared to the 64.8 % that the class of 2011 had recorded.

These figures confirm that out of 47 889 learners who wrote the 2012 Grade 12 examinations 33 504 passed. Of these learners 9 495 qualified for bachelor programmes as against 14 277 for Diplomas, 9 633 for Higher Certificates and 99 achieved the National Senior Certificate in 2012. The 2012 provincial pass rate improvement is a true testament of the commitment made by Mrs. Reginah Mhaule at the announcement of 2011 event; that the Department will spend sleepless nights in ensuring the improvement and the credibility of the examination process, true to her words the 2012 examination process were an incident free exam.

The Mpumalanga provincial districts also improved with Ehlanzeni District



MEC Reginah Mhaule congratulates matriculants who did well during the exams.

not only reclaiming its number one glory at a 74 percentage but also being the only district to get a percentage higher than the national performance. Nkangala, Gert Sibande and Bohlabela Districts registered 73%, 69% and 65.4% respectively.

The Bohlabela District in the past years was regarded as the most improved district in the province after it recorded an improvement of 30.6% in three years from 2009 to 2011. The challenge with this District was that it was performing far behind the rest of the districts in the province, said MEC Reginah Mhaule.

She continued to state that this challenge necessitated a focused programme for Bohlabela District alone, which seemed to be yielding the expected results as Bohlabela District in 2012 improved its results by 9.8% and is currently at 62.5%. This means that it has recorded an improvement of 32.6% in the past four years.

Bohlabela circuit was also the district that produced the overall provincial best learner, Calvin Mawera from Bushbuckridge Secondary School in Maviljan Circuit. He obtained eight distinctions in Sepedi Home Language, English First Additional Language,

Agricultural Sciences, Accounting, Physical Science, Life Sciences, Mathematics and Life Orientation. The MEC also announced on the day that Hoërskool Nelspruit was the overall best school in Mpumalanga. The school had 203 candidates sitting for the 2012 exams and out of these 169 of them satisfied the requirements for Bachelors programme, 32 for diploma and all the 203 candidates passed. 83.3% of candidates at Hoërskool Nelspruit obtained bachelor passes and it therefore becomes the school with the most bachelor passes in the province. It was also at this gracious event whereby the MEC also stated firmly that any school that will produce results below 50% from 2013 will be considered as dysfunctional schools. "We are serious about this and should this happen heads will roll just as the same will be applicable to those who obtained results below 30% for the second time. We reiterate our position that a school is as good as its principal, as such principals will always be held to account for the results of their respective schools," retorted the MEC. It was only fitting that educators and learners were also appreciated on the day, as it is after all through their hardwork and dedication that we continue to meet our set standards as a province. The Department aims to better the 2012 results by 10% with the support of teachers, parents, religious leaders, municipalities, the private sector and every other stakeholder that holds the same sentiments which are to build and teach the nation, but mostly with the dedication of the class of 2013. Sisonke Sifundzisa Sive.

- Nontobeko Nobela

Unemployed graduates to help unshackle failing projects



Youth salvage delapidating farms stads.

In an effort to deal with countless attempts to rescue the collapsing land reform farms in the province, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration (DARDLA) has taken a bold step and called upon all unemployed agriculture graduates to salvage the sinking ship. Hundreds of graduates from around the province heeded the call from the DARDLA former MEC, Mrs Candith Mashego-Dlamini, after inviting unemployed agriculture graduates to participate in the turn-around of the land reform

farms. Mrs. Mashego-Dlamini has since been moved to the Department of Health and Social Development after the recent cabinet reshuffle by Premier DD Mabuza. Before the cabinet reshuffle, Mashego-Dlamini addressed the graduates as DARDLA MEC at Lowveld College of Agriculture on the 17 February 2013. The meeting successfully continued the following day, where the programme managers engaged the graduates on various key departmental programmes. Addressing the graduates on the

first day, Mrs Mashego-Dlamini explained that the initiative was aimed at improving the skills base in the agricultural sector, and to develop partnership as part of the plans to turn around land reform farms. She stated that the agriculture sector employs a large number of unskilled labour workforce in Mpumalanga, yet statistics show that the sector in the province has less than 1.8 percent professionals.

The former MEC further indicated that the Department has identified 292 land reform farms that needed special attention. "Government has been investing heavily on these farms by developing both on-farm and off-farm infrastructure since the inception of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme. But the lack of management skills and resources at the farms has led to their downfall, hence our intervention," said Mashego-Dlamini.

The agriculture graduates would be given an on-the-field opportunity to work with the cooperatives that have been established by farmers, and be accountable to the farmers that they service. Mashego-Dlamini said the graduates, who are expected to come up with new innovations that would assist to advance food production,

would be placed in land reform farms, communal farms and gardens earmarked for the school nutrition programme and experiential training. "You will be working closely with mentors, coordinators, commercial farmers, successful black farmers, retired agriculture professionals, extension officers and researchers. This will help you gain experience, practical training and work as junior farm managers and ensure good management practices on all the farms," said Mashego-Dlamini. She added that the graduates would be receiving a stipend for a period of 12 months and upon completion of this term, the department would consider absorbing those who would have performed exceptional well in their respective farms.

The programme was received with mixed reactions; Ms Paulina Nurse Mahlangu from Ward 13 in Dr. JS Moroka Municipality is one of the many unemployed agriculture graduates that would benefit from the programme. She holds an Honours Degree in Agriculture but has been unemployed for many years. She warmly embraced the initiative, saying she hopes the opportunity would be her break-through in the agricultural sector. **Celani Ndude**

Agriculture- economic growth path

The Agricultural industry is one of the major drivers of economic growth in the province. As part of addressing the challenge of poverty, inequality, unemployment and sustainable livelihood, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration has prioritized crop production through Masibuyele Emasimini (ME) Programme.

The ME programme was introduced as an intervention to mobilize people back to agriculture as a means of sustaining livelihoods. The goal of the ME programme is to increase community food production so as to attain household food security, especially for the poor and vulnerable households. Mr Praisego Tembani Moyo of Weltevreden Farm at Emalahleni municipality is one of the people who have full evidence about Masibuyele Emasimini programme and other services offered by DARDLA. He is a member of Lima Ngilime Cooperative for commercial farmers. Being motivated by his father, who is a livestock farmer and having a passion for agriculture from childhood, Mr Moyo started farming in 2007 whereby the Department assisted him with maize seeds for a start. In 2008 he started planting soya beans, since then he never looked back. The DARDLA is assisting him with tractors, implements and fertilizers. He says passion without purpose is dangerous, passion should be profitable.

Currently Mr Moyo planted 218 ha of maize which he supplies to Afgri. For this year, he says he is looking at approximately 5.5 of tons per ha which he will supply. Mr. Moyo says he appreciates the service he receives from the local extension advisor of the Department. "It feels good to work with somebody who understands a farmer and his/ her needs to offer good advice, I am talking about a person who empowers farmers in every possible way", Mr Moyo said.

The main objectives of the ME programme are to provide mechanization support to the poor community households whose land is lying fallow to participate in agriculture through tilling their fields / backyards. The targeted beneficiaries are those who have been excluded in the past government interventions.

The programme also provide production inputs so as to ensure food massification, ensure food security at household level, increase access to food, increase farm income through crop sales, create jobs through tractor operators and implementation of production operations on farms supported under the programme

There's a saying that for one to be in power, he should have empowered somebody. Mr Moyo has four permanent employees and hires 40 people during the harvesting period. His advice to other emerging farmers is that "people should always try to seek information, and when that opportunity avails itself, they should grab it with both hands. They must be open minded and take advices from their extension officers"

It is the duty of an extension officer to:

- Use democratic methods in educating farmers.
- Help in adoption of innovations.
- Increase farm yields and improve the standard of living of farmers

Make good communities better and progressive. This manifests that working together; we can drive back unemployment and reduce economic inequality and poverty. - **Mbalenhle Mhlongo**



"Operation Bring Back" yielding fruitful results.

Help identify stolen government immovable properties

Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport through the "Operation Bring Back" is determined to recoup all stolen provincial government properties from fraudsters after the National Department of Public Works launched the campaign in 2011.

The campaign was introduced by the National Department of Public Works as plans are afoot to register all government property. The Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, which has a mandate to manage all immovable assets on behalf of the Mpumalanga province, is not exempted from the directive as is working tirelessly to regain all stolen provincial property.

According to the Senior Manager for Immovable Asset Monitoring, Ms Hellen Mdakane, her unit has a mandate to reconcile an asset register in a bid to attain a true state of assets in the province. This includes properties such as residential properties, schools, clinic, hospitals, libraries, archive buildings, vacant land, community halls, stadiums, etc.

"Furthermore, we are conducting a survey of all our rural properties on un-surveyed state land to obtain and register title deeds. In addition, we vest and endorse title deeds of the state properties for the province as well as pay rates and taxes to municipalities for all the provincial government assets" she explained.

She added that all the processes are part of the

compilation and enhancement of the asset register. Although the section is working around the clock to update and capture all the asset, but it expresses some concerns about some of the government properties which have not been reported or "stolen" as some of the properties were not properly captured by their predecessors such as the former Kangwane, KwaNdebele as well as TPA. She added that lack of data or source document to confirm that indeed a property vest with the provincial government is another major challenge for the section. "We therefore appeal to all government officials as well as the general public to alert us of such properties so that they could be captured on the register" she advised.

It is against this background that the National Department of Public Works introduced the Government Immovable Asset Management Act, no 19 of 2007 (GIAMA), as there was no legislative framework that governed the immovable assets. "Immovable Asset were managed in terms of the common law general principles of asset management, which proved to be chaotic for the state as different departments were inventing and implementing their own principles, she said. The processes of registering all government properties started in 2004 with the consolidation of all properties under the former Kangwane, KwaNdebele as well as TPA, which was used as a basis for the register.



CRDP brings change in the lives of impoverished rural women MEC

Dikeledi Mahlangu's sentiments echoed during the built-up towards the construction of the Bundu road late last year is becoming a reality where she appealed to contractors to employ more women in the construction of the projects. This was evident at the construction site of Injabulo Combined School at Dirkiesdorp 30 km away from Piet Retief at Mkhondo Municipality, where female construction workers are making their mark on the project. The construction of Injabulo Combined School at Dirkiesdorp is one amongst the other construction projects within the province managed by the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport

where women are employed to bring hope and change into their impoverished families. One female construction worker who made her mark on the project is 20 year old, Thembi Nkosi, who works as a General Assistant doing plastering work. She explained that since the start of the project in February 2012, her life changed for the better since she is now able to provide for her family. "We are no longer sleeping on an empty stomach, as I buy food and clothes for my kids who are still at school, she smiled. She said that life has been very difficult for her, as there was no one in the family who was working and there are no jobs at area. The project has created job opportunities to a total of sixty four (64) laborers

with youth and men included on the workforce. The majority of the workers had little or no skills when recruited into the project, hence the contractor trained them within the various skills in artisanship. The project is expected to be completed by the end of March 2013 with the construction of 9 classroom, admin block, library, computer centre, school hall, 16 toilets, steel palisade fence, electricity, water, kitchen, rails and ramps, two sports ground as well as a parking area. Dirkiesdorp is one of the impoverished rural villages in the province with the high rate of unemployment according to the School's Principal at Injabulo Combined School, Mr. Musa Nhlabathi "Most matriculants

in the area fail to continue within their tertiary education despite their good performance, as most parents are unemployed. They are unable to further their studies due to the financial problems within the homes" The schoolmaster stressed that the construction of the school has brought hope to many families in the area as they can now able to provide for their families. There is little development taking place in the area and infrastructure provision is what the community requires as it provides the much needed job opportunities. Injabulo Combined School was identified together with other projects in the province as part of the Comprehensive Rural Development Project by Premier, David Mabuza.

Churches remain critical in fight against immorality in society

Churches remain important institutions in the fight against immorality that includes acts that borders on criminality in our society, Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC, Vusi Shongwe told the El Shaddai Tabernacle Church congregation in Nelspruit recently. Shongwe said that churches should become active social agents and assist government to root out social ills such as sexual abuse of women and children, physically harming innocent and helpless elderly women and children as well as drinking and driving. Shongwe urged church institutions not to sit back and criticize government but instead assist the leadership in government to build morally sound societies that would assist in eliminating of criminality and road carnage.

The MEC has also called on parents to stop abdicating the responsibility of raising their children to government but they must instead play their parenting roles effectively and stop using rights as an excuse not to discipline their children.

"We cannot use rights as an excuse not to discipline our children, we need to remember that rights are not absolute



MEC Vusi Shongwe receive a token of appreciation from Pastor Petros Mdakane and his wife.

and that that with every right there is responsibility that accompanies that right," the MEC said.

He added that his department will continue to engage all stakeholders in the fight against crime and road carnage.

Speaking after the service El Shaddai Tabernacle Church's Pastor Petros Mdakane agreed with Shongwe that

churches cannot become spectators who merely criticize government when things are not going well.

Mdakane said churches should pray for government to be able to deliver services to its people and that churches must instill morality in its membership.

"A morally sound society cannot folds its arms when children and elderly

women are being abused by rogue elements who are living amongst us but instead will take a stand against barbaric acts of abusing and killing innocent children," Mdakane said. Mdakane has also promised that his church will continuously pray for the government of the day and assists with building of vibrant, caring and morally sound societies.



MEC Vusi Shongwe embracing the glorious moment with El Shaddai Tabernacle Church members.

Mpumalanga excel in building infrastructure projects



The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport has been hard at work in ensuring that the lives of people of Mpumalanga are changed for the better. As the financial year is about to end, we looked at the progress on infrastructure projects in the Department. The projects have seen many communities including disadvantaged communities benefiting from the building of schools, clinics, libraries and hospital. Not only have the public benefited from the infrastructure projects but also on job opportunities. About 40 690 job opportunities were created on the current infrastructure projects. During the current financial year of 2012/13 seventy seven (77) schools have been built and maintained around the province. The schools include those that have been built in disadvantaged areas, those schools which were affected by storms and also schools that need renovations. They include amongst others, Mhlangana Secondary School, Pugishe Primary

School, Mzimba Secondary School, Greenvalley Primary in the Bohlabela District.

Other schools that were built and maintained are in the Ehlanzeni District and they include Ekhiyeni Primary, Khanyisile Primary, Prof SS Ripinga, Mbazima School amongst others. Schools were also built in Gert Sibande and they include Qhubulwazi Combined, Enkundleni Primary, Mlilo Combined and KI Thwala Secondary. The community in Nkangala District also benefited with various schools being built and maintained including Penolope Special School, Mantjedi Special School, Ramoshidi Secondary, Vulamehlo Primary and Ndedema Primary.

The Department also excelled in building and maintaining of health infrastructure. Many communities also benefited as new clinics have been built, hospitals upgraded and major renovations of community health centers. About 47 health infrastructure projects have been completed in the current financial

year. The health infrastructure projects which have been completed include Embhuleni Hospital in the Albert Luthuli Local Municipality, Rob Ferreira Hospital in Ehlanzeni, Tintswalo Hospital and Bongani Hospital in the Bohlabela District. Others include Delmas Hospital, Carolina Hospital, KwaMhlanga Hospital, Perdekop Community Health Centre, Mpumalanga Nursing College, Mthimba Clinic, M'afrika Clinic and various health infrastructure projects around the province.

Not only did the Department built schools, clinics and hospitals but also government offices to render better services to the communities. The Department has managed to complete five Department of Social Development offices which include KaMaqhekeza Offices where there was construction of 10 offices, Carolina Branch Office, 16 offices were also constructed. While the three Social Development offices are still under construction but nearly completion.

The Department has been busy in

constructing and upgrading libraries around the Province. The projects include the construction of the provincial archive building, Ermelo regional library and Masoyi Library. It also includes the upgrading of Middelburg Library. According to Akhona Majova who is a General Manager Professional Services, with the current achievement the Department has been really hard at work. There is still more to be done by Department in terms of infrastructure projects. Plans for the next financial year includes the phase two construction of the Traffic College, many clinics, upgrading and renovation of Mpumalanga Nursing College. People of Marite in Bohlabela will also benefit from the construction of the Department of Social Development offices in the next financial year. So many work will be done to improve the lives of people of Mpumalanga by the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport", she concluded.

Washed away bridge to be constructed in Gert Sibande



After heavy rain in Gert Sibande District Municipality, a pipe culvert on Provincial road P168/1 between Ermelo and Lothair was washed away by flood waters. A gap of about 10m

(measured along the road centreline) was left, and about 10m deep estimated measurement.

The area is in the Msukaligwa Local Municipality that forms part of the Gert Sibande District Municipality.

The road is classified as Class R3 (rural 3) in terms of RISFSA (Road Infrastructure Strategic Framework of South Africa).

The incident took place on Provincial road P168/1 between Ermelo and Lothair, about 8 km from the N17 on the way towards Lothair. According to Mr Stephan Pienaar, Senior Manager of Roads Planning, P168/1 is a single carriageway paved road with gravel shoulders, in a fair condition (VCI in the order of 50 in 2011), road marking in fair condition, good sight distance at the culvert where the vertical alignment is in a sag and a traffic count of between 1 000 and 1 500 vehicles per day.

The culvert that was washed away consisted of an Armco pipe with a diameter of about 1.2m to 1.5m according to Mr Pienaar. Mr Pienaar said "Due to its relatively small size, this specific structure is not included as a bridge

in the Department's BMS (Bridge Management System), and would therefore not have been subjected to bridge-type regular inspections". The Department has appointed a professional Civil Engineering Consultant to perform the site investigation, preliminary design and possible alternatives, detail design and documentation which has already been done.

The Department is in the process of appointing a contractor to perform the construction of the works, starting in March 2013.

An exercise is planned to locate and identify similar culverts on all Provincial paved roads and inspect each one for possible defects or risks. The key issue is the protection of the inlet by a suitable concrete headwall to channel water into the culvert without risk of erosion around it. The structure itself must also be checked for corrosion and signs of deformation concluded Pienaar.

Young people en-routes to poultry

Speeding up growth and transforming the economy to create decent work and sustainable livelihoods is one of the key priorities which inform the mandate of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration. This became evident as Mr Simon Mudau of Progressive Poultry Abattoir in conjunction with DARDLA had brought transformation into eight young persons from Nkangala District, as they will be getting economic freedom after their 12 months training as Poultry Examiners and Inspectors. Mr Mudau is a business man who has passion for agriculture and has interests in agro-processing. His project came to existence after approaching DARDLA for more information on this industry and doing all the necessary consultations with the community and other stakeholders. The department

also assisted him with technical support through district services. Progressive Poultry Abattoir will be located in Eland-spruit, Nkangala District between Emalahleni and Steve Tshwete municipalities. It will be fed by different poultry houses from the district.

The trainees just started with their contact sessions as poultry examiners on 16 January 2013. The course is being rendered by Academy for Continuous Professional Development, facilitated by Vanessa Clarke who is a Chief Meat Inspector from DAFF. This will also include the practical training which will take place at Afgri Daybreak in Delmas. Mr. Mudau cannot wait for the project to take-off. He affirmed that change is yet to come; this project will create lots of opportunities in the province as well as the district, he concluded.

- Mbalenhle Mhlongo



FET COLLEGE GIVES FARMERS HOPE

Immediately after the grade 12 results were released for 2012 examination by the National Department of Education, the provincial Department of Agriculture Rural Development and Land Administration did not sit back instead it took various farmers from the Gert-Sibande District to a two weeks training course on vegetables production in Mzinti Training Centre at Nkomazi municipality on 15-25 January 2013.

According to Mr. Dumisane Ndhlovu, training officer from the Department, all the 14 farmers that have attended the training course on vegetables production have an agricultural background and attended the training course so that they can apply the knowledge they have obtained in their farms. The vegetables production course is a National Qualification Framework (NQF) that has 19 credit units (Level two), he said. The two weeks training course included theory and practical work. For the practical work, the farmers were taken to field trips in the Mzinti area whereby they went to a farm to identify some of the diseases which are found on plants such as early blight, late blight, fusarium wilt, verticillium wilt, powdery mildew, botrytis rot, bacterial wilt, bacterial speck and bacterial spot.

Some of the activities the farmers were involved in included visiting the Naas shopping centre where some economic activities happen at Nkomazi municipality. An interaction or market research session between the farmers and vendors took place with the sole purpose to find out where the vendors obtain their produce and the frequency of obtaining the produce and how much it was costing.

Ndlhovu said, the visit to local markets was to show farmers that indeed there is demand for fresh produce and one can supply vendors with what they produce in their farms and it does not necessarily need to be a big market that they can supply. He also said you can start small and then grow bigger to supply bigger companies as long as you are reliable and consistent with your fresh produce supply.

One of the farmers who attended the training Mr Mduduzi Nduze said farming is his life and he feels very much fortunate to be part of the trainees. Nduze is looking forward at starting a two hector farm that will produce vegetables, currently he has a broiler farm in Mkhondo local municipality, he said the compost will help a great deal in the planned garden and with the knowledge obtained during the training he will utilize it to his advantage.

For those who are interested in participating in the FET's agricultural trainings the Department of Agriculture Rural Development can be contacted in their nearest agricultural offices which are available in the Mpumalanga Province or visit the departmental website dardla@mpg.gov.za

- Andile Shabangu



Premier David Mabuza insists that the CDWs should be well equipped so they can do their work efficiently.

Premier Mabuza empowers CDWs with laptops, cellphones and travelling allowance

Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza has decided that all 497 community development workers [CDWs] in the province be given laptops, cellphones and travelling allowances in order for them to work effectively. Mr Mabuza made the announcement during a special meeting with all the CDWs from the province at Ehlanzeni District's Disaster Management Centre.

CDWs serve communities as catalysts of change and development. They serve as a link between communities and government. However, according to the Premier lack of working tools make it difficult for them to alert government on matters of service delivery. With laptops, CDWs are now expected to send information weekly on development initiatives including infrastructure projects to the Operational Centre in order for government to respond speedily on matters of concern. The Operational Centre which will be staffed with officials from the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), will be based at the

Head Office and will interact with CDWs directly by responding to the people's concerns. The entire provincial government will have access to information at the Operational Centre, and will be expected to respond on matters as soon as possible. The provision of laptops, cellphones and travelling allowances for CDWs is in line with government's commitment to improve the capacity of all structures for service delivery. The tools for trade are expected to help CDWs to do their work better in alerting government about the progress in the construction of RDP houses and other related government's public infrastructure projects.

In his address, Mabuza said he has discovered lack of progress in projects which should have been completed. We gave people work to build houses, schools and clinics and it has taken them years. You [CDWs] kept quiet until I personally went there to find out what the problem was, when you had been given this opportunity of working with the people. You should have alerted us long time ago about

the housing problems and government would have intervened. With these laptops, we are expecting you to give us information on a weekly basis," said Mabuza.

He added that those who were computer illiterate would be trained urgently in order for them to be able to work effectively. "We now want a different type and a special calibre of CDWs, those who are passionate about community development and are technologically skilled. You must be able to tell us as to how many people deserve government houses in your wards, do not hide the incompetent contractors, because by doing that you will be delaying the freedom of the people.

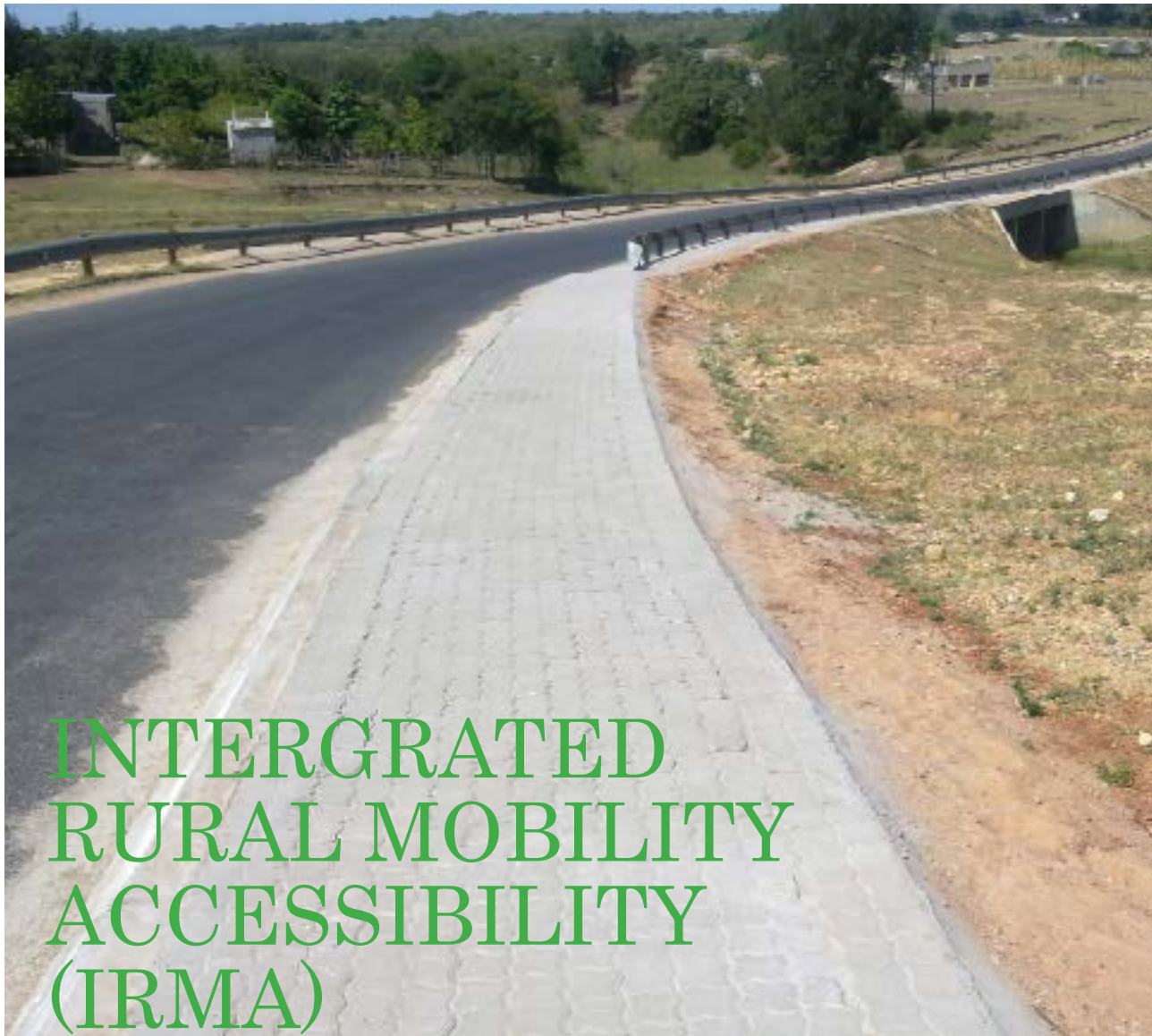
They also destroy the future of our children when they do not finish building schools," said Mabuza. The Premier asked the CDWs to visit all sectors in the communities and report progress especially on government projects. He appealed to them to be passionate about the people they were working for by presenting themselves professionally.

He explained that in order for communities to have confidence on them, they needed to have the best character, and should appear in a respectful manner in order for people to respect them back.

"You now have a very complex exercise to do. You are like teachers and priests, your character must be the best in your communities. You are now my police officers; we want reports on everything that impacts negatively to our people. As from today onwards, you will earn your money because you would have worked hard for it. Go out to the people, humble yourselves and be their servants", he added.

One of the challenges for the "slow pace" in building the RDP houses was that the department of human settlement did not have a list of beneficiaries for houses.

It will now be the sole responsibility of the CDWs to identify such beneficiaries which is a requirement before an RDP house is built. The Premier also considered to give the CDWs travelling allowances since some wards are vast and require extensive travelling.



INTERGRATED RURAL MOBILITY ACCESSIBILITY (IRMA)

The Integrated Rural Mobility Accessibility (IRMA) projects is a government initiative which seeks to employ innovative projects to address the difficulties facing rural communities in accessing basic service such as schools, health centers, pension payouts, graveyards and markets.

Furthermore, the IRMA projects is to find innovative and sustainable solutions to challenges relating to accessing socio-economic opportunities by communities through, the provision of appropriate and integrated rural transportation infrastructure and service complete with adequate funding streams for maintenance and development.

The Department Of Public Works Roads and Transport has developed a programme with Integrated Rural Mobility Accessibility (IRMA) projects all over the province, one of the projects that the department is currently busy with for 2012/2013 financial year is Kwaggafontein Side Walk, Ntombe 2 Foot Bridge and Steynsdorp Culvert Bridge, with the total cost of more than 10 million.

The Kwaggafontein Side Walk will reduce down the number of accidents involving school children around the area; because children will now walk on the side walk instead on walking in the streets endangering their lives. This project will also create more job opportunities for the community who will be employed as labourers.

Mr Themba Nkosi from Steynsdorp who owns a number of livestock and a farm says he is excited about the culvert bridge that is being built at Steynsdorp. "My livestock will be able to cross to the area during winter time or when it rains, our lives will change and improve for betterment when the bridge is complete".

Bus shelters are also part of IRMA projects, The Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality in the Nkangala District has benefited from this projects, the community around the municipality uses buses as a mode of transport

Dipaleseng Municipality has improved the state of its road in Balfour

The Dipaleseng Local Municipality has completed the construction of roads in Balfour. The poor state of roads in the town precipitated the need to initiate the road construction project which entailed the following:

- Reshaping of side drains,
- Replacement of old edge beams,
- Reconstruction of edge breaks,
- Patching of pot holes,
- Paving of road island.

Balfour links Mpumalanga and Gauteng Provinces. It is the gateway of goods transport between the two provinces. The high volume of trucks contributed to the poor state of the road, causing potholes. Patching of potholes became the hall mark of the construction project. The scope of work was also extended to reseal the Sifiso Zwane street and the Johnny Mokoena Drive as well as the Frank street. By paving the road island in Pertunia street the municipality has increased the life span of the road for many years to come. Road traffic signs have also been improved. The total cost of the

project is R 857 0 and has contributed to the improvement of internal roads in the Balfour CBD, linking the supermarket and the taxi rank.

The construction of the road provided the much-needed income relief to the local communities facing an acute shortage of jobs and training opportunities. Although sixteen job opportunities were created, however, it is still below the 258 target set by the municipality as a contribution to the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). The number is expected to increase in view of the number of projects underway, which include the expansion of the Balfour Sewer Treatment Plant, the construction of a new Landfill site in Balfour/Siyathemba, upgrading of water reticulation and expansion of the sewer works in Grootvlei.

ROAD WORKS: Paving of the road island at Pertunia street became part of the road construction in Balfour.
EFFICIENCY: A completed part of the road in Balfour.





NYDA Nelspruit Branch Manager: April Motloung, Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality Executive Mayor: Cllr BP Shiba with the youth in Human Settlements during a launch at Mbejeka in Tjakastad.

Youth in Human Settlements Launched in Mpumalanga

Youth development is a fundamental element in addressing issues of poverty and unemployment in the country. It provides the youth with methods for participating in the socio-economic development in their areas whether rural or urban settings. Succeeding in conceptualising the model of human settlements beyond housing, the department launched Youth in Human Settlements in all the regions.

“The future lies in the hands of the young ones, 51% of the population of South Africa consist of young people under the age of 24. Our development and progress is linked on how it contributes to the growth of youth in our country” said Mr M Sethosa during a launch at Mbejeka in Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality.

This is in line with the 2030 vision for and by the youth. The vision was introduced by Minister Tokyo Sexwale in his 2010 budget vote emphasising the following “in crafting our vision for human settlements 2030, we are mindful that a child born today will be 20 years old by 2030, and will need somewhere to live. We should be planning for the needs of that future adult. To succeed, human settlements 2030 must be for and by the youth. It is about their own future homes, apartments, and bachelor flats and so on; it is about future rural settlements and urban centres, towns and cities. This also contributes to economic growth and job creation. Human settlements 2030 should be the campaign of our young people for their own future”. Youth in Human settlements is a development programme initiated and supported by the Department of Human Settlements, National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) and National Youth Development Agency (NYDA).

The programme is aimed at changing the lives of unemployed youth in South Africa. It is a platform dedicated in systematic participation in human settlements delivery and showcases the participation of stakeholders towards youth development and community development. It serves to encourage the youth to participate in the construction and Human Settlements industry. The programme provides the youth with training in technical skills at the level of NQF 3, it is a six months programme accredited by SETA. The work experience they gain provides them with an opportunity to develop skills in working with tools and performing functions related to construction. The programme assists in responding to the growing crisis of youth unemployment in the country by coaching them into pursuing self employment through entrepreneurship. It reveals the youth’s zeal and capacity to improve their own communities and be proud of the contributions they make towards improving their area. The participation unfolds on fully operational construction sites where the youth are working in teams to build permanent community assets. In aiding them to gain experiential education, training takes place in serviced land identified by the municipality with 50 approved beneficiaries. The learners take part in construction of low cost houses under the supervision of a contractor on site. The programme was launched in Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) presidential nodal point at Nkomazi Local Municipality, Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality and Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality. Since many students come directly from difficult life situations, a need based stipend is granted during the duration of the training.

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