



President Jacob Zuma accompanied by the Minister of Water and Sanitation Ms Nomvula Mankonyane and Minister in the Presidency Mr Jeff Radebe monitor the progress of water delivery for the community of Bushbuckridge.

## Presidential Siyahhlola Monitoring Programme

**P**resident Jacob Zuma undertook a visit to Bushbuckridge in the Mpumalanga Province to monitor the delivery of water and sanitation as well as other basic services in the area as part of the Presidential Siyahhlola

Monitoring Programme. The Presidential visit follows the appeal by the community members in the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality for government to intervene in addressing service delivery challenges facing the community,

in particular water and sanitation, human settlement, roads, electricity as well as refuse removal. According to research, Bushbuckridge faces a number of challenges including high poverty levels, crime,

unemployment, service delivery backlogs and skills shortages among others. President Jacob Zuma visited service delivery sites to monitor the work that has been done thus far and also determined what else more needs to be



President Jacob Zuma visits the Inyaka Dam as part of his Siyahlola Monitoring Programme.

done to address the service delivery challenges faced by the people of Bushbuckridge and surrounding areas. The President inspected progress made by the Department of Water and Sanitation, (DWS) and its water utility Rand Water in alleviating water shortages in the short and long term.

The Department of Water and Sanitation has commissioned the construction of Inyaka Dam with a storage capacity of 123 million cubic meters in 2001 at a cost of R1 billion. Subsequently the construction of Inyaka Purification Water Treatment Works commenced in 2001 and was done in phases with the last phase being completed in November 2013.

After the completion of the plant, it was realized that out of the 120 211 households to benefit from the scheme, 78 500 there is still no reticulated and connected. This has resulted in a signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2013 between the Department of Water and Sanitation and the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, wherein an agreement to utilize Rand Water to implement reticulation in order to fast track service delivery.

"While Bushbuckridge faces a serious water supply challenge, President Jacob Zuma said

that progress is also being made due to work being done by government through the expansion of infrastructure. Water is life and it is also one of the key engines of economic growth and development," he said.

According to President Jacob Zuma, the Inyaka Dam has been completed at a cost of one billion rand and provides a secure source of water for the domestic, municipal, and industrial users in the Bushbuckridge area in the sub-catchments of the Sabie and Sand rivers.

He stated that the Inyaka Dam also ensures a stable water supply for irrigation development in the Bushbuckridge area.

He said that the upgrading of the Hoxane Regional Water Scheme began in June this year and is expected to be completed in June 2017.

"Once commissioned, the Scheme is intended to serve more than thirty thousand households within Bushbuckridge South and close to fifty thousand households in Nsikazi North within Mbombela. Plans are also in place to secure the long term water supply for the Bushbuckridge area beyond 2023, by investing in an augmentation scheme for the Inkomati and Sabie catchments,"

he said.

With regards to the water challenges in the Bushbuckridge area, President Jacob Zuma said that government has mandated Rand Water which was primarily Gauteng-based, to come into the area of Bushbuckridge and to assist in resolving the challenges of access to water through rapid infrastructure development.

"This is in line once more, with the National Development Plan that has directed us to align our state entities and institutions with the state developmental goals. Through our current interventions in this area of Bushbuckridge, we have invested over a billion rand, with just under five hundred million rand spent to date on phase one," he said.

President Jacob Zuma told the crowd at the Thulamahashe stadium that an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Water Security, chaired by Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Pravin Gordhan that will discuss and propose further interventions to the communities mostly affected by the drought, has been established.

Concerning poverty and unemployment, President Jacob Zuma said that Government is intervening through programmes such as the expanded public

works programme (EPWP) and also environmental programmes to create short term employment. He added that the SA Social Security Agency (SASSA), pays out over one hundred and fifty eight million rand for various grants in the Bushbuckridge area monthly and this includes grants for old age, child support, foster care, Care Dependency, and Social Relief of Stress.

President Jacob Zuma said that the poor quality of the roads in Bushbuckridge has been raised sharply and will be prioritized by government.

On energy, he added that since 2012, more than nine thousand households have been connected to the electricity grid in Bushbuckridge and anticipated that electrification would be complete within the next two financial years.

Ministers and Deputy Ministers accompanying the President also responded to many issues they encountered during their door to door and community visits at Bushbuckridge, these issues also included challenges facing the municipality at a governance level.

"While a lot has been done, there is still a long way to go as we improve the quality of life in Bushbuckridge and surroundings," President Jacob Zuma concluded.



Mpumalanga Province geared towards addressing the plight of farm dwellers.

## Commission investigates socio-economic conditions of farm dwellers

**A** Commission of Enquiry appointed by Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza is in a process of investigating the living conditions of farm dwellers in the Mpumalanga Province.

Premier Mabuza said that the appointment of the Commission is according to the section 2(1) of the Mpumalanga Commissions of Inquiry Act, of 1998 (Act No. 11 of 1998).

Currently, the Commission of Enquiry is conducting public hearings and farms visits in different regions of the Province, giving platform to the farm workers and dwellers to state their challenges they are experiencing in the farms on a daily basis.

Premier Mabuza said that all findings and recommendations contained in the report should be accompanied by supporting

documentation.

The members of the Commission of Enquiry appointed by Premier Mabuza consist of Advocate Jacob Jakobus Gerhardus Louw, Mr. Ernest Mako, Advocate Eunanda Euginia Fourie, Mr Thabo Mokoena, Mr Michael Knowledge Soko and Ms Nomvula Mavis Maya. Premier Mabuza said that the members of the Commission will investigate the living conditions of farm dwellers in the Mpumalanga Province in general with reference to the following terms.

- The protection of human rights with specific emphasis on the realization of socio-economic rights.
- Safety and security
- Security of Tenure
- Employment security
- Access to adequate and sustainable housing
- Access to basic services

such as electricity, water and sanitation

- Working conditions including working hours, levels, scope and extent of compensation and as well as compliance with safe and healthy working conditions.
- Access to quality education
- Access to quality health care
- Access to the justice system
- The prevalence of unlawful evictions and the curtailment thereof

He said that a 10 million budget has been set aside for the project, depending on the extent of the work. He said that the budget will cover for transport, meetings, venue, accommodation and remuneration. According to Premier Mabuza, the commission has been given a time frame of eight months, depending on the velocity of the problem.

“We want to comprehensively address the plight of the people

and avoid addressing these issues one by one,” he said.

As much as farm workers are needed for production, Premier Mabuza said that their conditions have to be favourable to them as well.

“Most of the farm workers have settled and have sentimental issues. They need to have basic needs like every living human being,” he said.

The Commission will compile a report that will indicate in each instance, the level, scope and extent of recommended intervention by Government in order to address shortcomings, transgressions, non compliance with legislation and other challenges identified during the course of the investigation. Premier Mabuza said that all findings and recommendations contained in the report should be accompanied by supporting documentation.



Mpumalanga Province Premier, Mr David Mabuza, officially launches Operation Vuka Sisebente delivery model.

## Mpumalanga Provincial Government launches “Operation Vuka Sisebente”

Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza has launched “Operation Vuka Sisebente”, a model aimed at ensuring that all the challenges faced by communities in the province are attended to and that service delivery protests in the Province are minimized. Launching the model at Mkhuhlu Stadium, Bushbuckridge, Premier Mabuza told the crowd that it will be operational in all municipal wards in the Mpumalanga Province and will serve as a platform for achieving optimum efficiency and bringing government services closer to the people. Premier Mabuza said that this community based model is merely focused at tackling the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequalities. He added that the project aims at capacitating communities and to develop a platform in both rural and urban areas that will enable them to participate in their own

development processes. According to Premier Mabuza, 37 offices in Bushbuckridge have already been established and the leaders in the war rooms are people who have been chosen by their own communities. He said that this project will enable households and individuals to present their daily socio-economic challenges to government. He explained that issues such as roads, clinics, schools, water, electricity, that are centered around basic needs will be addressed at the war rooms that will be situated in every ward. Premier Mabuza further articulated that the war rooms will remain open on a daily basis for individual households to register their issues. He explained that communities will report directly to the war rooms chaired by ward councilors who will be working closely with fieldworkers, caregivers, community development workers, ward

committees, taxi associations, adding that churches and traditional leaders have also been included in the war rooms. According to Premier Mabuza all phones of the war room members will remain available and they will report to the Office of the MEC’s and the Premier. He added that the war room will record all issues raised, assess them and find relevant agents that will deal with the issues at ward level. He stated that the war rooms will also keep records and provide feedback to the communities or individuals who raised the issues directly, and also through the ward committees. In case where issues cannot be dealt with at ward level, he said that the war rooms will refer the matters to the Local Task Team at Local Municipal level where they will be further addressed. “War rooms will also be receiving feedback from the municipality level about every issue and solutions provided,”

he said. In order to ensure that the “Operation Vuka Sisebente project” is effective, Premier Mabuza said that fieldworkers and volunteers who will be rendering services at the war rooms will be fully trained on the approaches of involving individuals and communities at different levels. “Government cannot address people’s needs without people. I have heard your cries and we are prepared to interact with people. Every complaint that is brought will be accepted and attended to,” said Premier Mabuza. Kgoshi Mokoena said. “This will minimize service delivery and when community members have challenges they will have a place where they will get help. The war rooms are not places for settling scores, but they are meant for planning and development of our own people. All we want is for the challenges to reach government through the right channel,” he concluded.



Shaping young minds - Techno X 2015.

## Today's minds tomorrow's future

**A** largest career guidance exhibition event in South Africa which attracted thousands of learners from Mpumalanga took place for the first time in Secunda. The event, Techno X 2015, that was held together with National Science Week, was held at Secunda. This flagship science education event was aimed at encouraging grade 5 to grade 12 learners to choose Mathematics and Science in school and also to pursue careers in related fields. More than 60 exhibitions from academic institutions, businesses, Sasol business units, learners, had an opportunity to interact with the learners and to give career guidance, bursary opportunities, as well as advice from academic institutions on which subjects to choose from in order pursue careers of their choices.

Speaking on behalf of the Premier of Mpumalanga Province Honourable DD Mabuza, MEC for Education, Reginah Mhaule said the 2015 theme '*Today's minds, tomorrow's future*' talks to the importance of Science and Technology which is shaping and developing the future generations.

"Technological advances that our citizens, young and old are pursuing today will have a massive impact on what lies ahead for all humanity and the environment," she said. MEC Mhaule said that the founding of this Expo stands as a testament to the restless curiosity, the boundless hope so essential not just for the scientific and technology quest, but for the development and prosperity of an experiment called South Africa by extension,

Mpumalanga Province.

MEC Mhaule said that government is investing millions of rands on an annual basis in programmes like Dinaledi schools, a National Strategy for Science, Mathematics and Technology; and many other programmes to increase the number of learners studying mathematics and physical science in Grades 10 to 12; to increase the number of higher grade learners in these subjects-especially girls and formerly disadvantaged learners and to increase the pass rate and achievement in mathematics and science in these grades; to develop the capacity of the mathematics and physical science teachers

"This partnership which also includes programmes that are run by other companies like the mining companies, the forestry industry, agriculture, the manufacturing industry, the energy sector and the financial institutions are beginning to bear fruit. If all these programmes were co-ordinated in a way that pulls all resources together the impact would be massive and far reaching than it is currently the case," she said.

"Because of breakthroughs in science and technology, we have seen greatest advances in medicine that has led to the discovery of antibiotics and improved public health care like vaccines against smallpox, polio, treatment of diseases like HIV and AIDS and TB. We have the potential to make enormous progress against diseases in the years to come," she added.

Addressing delegates at the event, Wrenelle

Stander, Senior Vice President: Public Affairs and Real Estate Services at Sasol, said that the Sasol Techno X was a very significant event in the education calendar. "It is one of the many ways that Sasol is demonstrating its commitment to developing South Africa's future leaders in Science, Mathematics, Technology, Engineering and related fields," he said.

MEC Mhaule said that government's commitment to improve Maths Science and Technology at school level needs to extend from the classroom laboratory to the market place.

"Science, technology and innovation proceed more rapidly and more cost effectively when insights, risks and cost are shared between the private and the public sector and among the private sector," she said.

She also called upon school principals and governing bodies to stop offering students choices of subjects that exclude Maths and Science.

"Maths literacy is not good enough if you want a career that has Science and Technology. We are also encouraging all schools to teach Maths and Science at higher grade," she said.

She also called upon students who do well in Maths and Science to take teaching as a career for the sake of having good educators. "Science and Technology will help us in fighting the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and gross inequalities by opening up more opportunities for our future generations," she concluded.



Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Vusi Shongwe and Mbombela Local Municipality Mayor, Sibusiso Mathonsi walking into Nkomeni Sports Ground in Pienaar as they were welcomed by placards against women and child abuse from local residents.

## Women should not be pressured to withdraw abuse cases-MEC Shongwe

**M**pumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Vusi Shongwe said that women who become abused should not be afraid to open cases so that perpetrators face the consequences of their actions.

Shongwe was speaking during the Provincial launch of 16 Days of Activism Against Women and Children abuse in Pienaar near Mbombela last month.

The MEC said that the problem with abuse cases was that most of the women were afraid to open cases against their abusers because they were either bread winners or were of particular standing in a society. He said that victims should report to the police and also assist the police to investigate such cases so that they are resolved.

"Our women must stand their ground and stand by their statements even in the most difficult and trying times," he said.

As part of fighting the scourge of gender based violence, the MEC further called on traditional leaders to instil proper cultural practices and moral values among the people that they lead.

According to the MEC, the abuse women and children is a reflection on the society's moral standing and therefore, abuse is a societal problem which should collectively be addressed by all.

He said that although violence against

women and children takes place behind closed doors, the community should intervene as part of rectifying moral decay in the society. Shongwe also said: "if we have a community with good morals, we cannot produce old men who will rape a one year old baby, a boy who will rape an 80 year woman and kill her.

"A community grounded on morals will not produce a person who can take a panga and kill a woman. Such heartless people must be exposed, isolated and dealt with even before they can commit their evil deeds."

The MEC further said non-governmental organizations (NGOs), churches sports clubs and other society formations must also play their role in the fight against gender based violence.

The impact of alcohol abuse on women and child abuse was also highlighted with the MEC saying some mothers neglect their children when they are drunk and even abuse them emotionally and physically. Shongwe also lambasted men who stay at taverns until late only to go home and abuse their partners and children. He has called on liquor outlets owners to ensure that they comply with the law by among others not allowing children in their establishments. He also stated that parents should take a lead in protecting their children by ensuring that they do not go to taverns because they could end up becoming victims of crime.

Speaking at the same event, Mpakeni Traditional Council Chief Sicelo Nkosi has encouraged community members to report abuse cases to the police. The chief said that abuse cases that are solved in families often prejudices victims and justice can only be served if the police are given space to deal with such cases.

Chief Nkosi also pleaded with the community to harmoniously live with one another and that parents should teach their children well so that they do not become easy targets for evil doers.

He added that as he presides over some of the domestic cases in this jurisdiction, he has observed some of the rifts between mother in laws and their daughters in law.

The Chief said that such incidences also contribute towards domestic violence and that the families should always try to peacefully co-exist with each other.

At the same event, one of the wheel chair bound resident received a wheel chair from the provincial government while other identified community members received assistance in the form of agricultural starter packs.

Learners from five identified schools were also presented with uniforms while others were also presented with Dignity sanitation packs that will last for six months. The packs were donated by National Youth Development Agency (NYDA).



Human Settlements Deputy Minister, Zoe Kota-Fredericks handing over house keys to one of the low cost housing beneficiaries, Ms Lorkie Mohlala accompanied by Minister for State Security Mr David Mahlobo, MECs Violet Siwela, Refilwe Mtshweni and a local councillor.

## Families receive houses during President Zuma's visit

**A**n act of generosity was experienced recently when two young contractors donated two fully furnished houses to needy households in Xanthia Village in Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, Mpumalanga. The contractors, Umcebo Projects and Mgumbani Business Enterprise took it upon themselves to give back to the community and donated the houses and household items to the Mohlala and Ndlovu households who are living under appalling conditions. One of the recipients, 23-year old Ms Lorkie Mohlala

cheerfully said that their lives will never be the same again after the unbelievable donation. She said, "It has been such a long and tough road to get to where we are today. I still can't believe that this is happening to us. I am so happy and would like to thank everyone that has played a part in making a difference in our lives – particularly the CDW's that had identified us." Mohlala is one of the three children under the custody of mother, 47-year old Ms Winnie Mohlala. The family survive on government's social grants. Umcebo Projects Director, Ms Gugu Nkosi impressed

on stakeholders, especially business to work together in bringing change to the communities by giving back to the needy. "We are excited to have made such a difference in someone's life. This is not only the government's responsibility to bring change and help people to live a better life – it is however a communal challenge that affects all of us hence the need to work together, she charged." Deputy Minister of Human Settlements, Ms Zoe Kota-Fredericks and MEC Violet Siwela commended the contractors for their bountiful support and courage to plough

back to communities. Said Siwela, "It is very pleasing that a young female contractor from Umcebo showing such a gesture by giving from her pocket in support of the destitute. Government really appreciates such selfless initiatives by service providers in ensuring that the nation is housed". Deputy Minister Kota-Fredericks praised the department for setting aside 30 percent of its budget towards empowering female contractors. Minister of State Security, Mr David Mahlobo and CoGTA MEC, Refilwe Mtshweni also witnessed the donation.

# The Women's Economic Summit promotes equal access



Mpumalanga Premier, Mr David Mabuza gives support to female entrepreneurs during the first ever Women's Summit in Province.

**T**he empowerment of women in South Africa is about dealing with the legacy of apartheid and about the transformation of society, particularly the transformation of power relations between women, men, institutions and laws.

This is according to Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza during the official opening of the Women's Economic Summit held at the Ngwenyama Lodge, White River.

He said that women's economic empowerment is about addressing gender oppression, patriarchy, sexism, racism, ageism, and structural oppression. Premier Mabuza said that women empowerment creates an environment that enables women to take control of their own lives and livelihoods. "The Mpumalanga Provincial Government has, over the past twenty years, demonstrated its commitment to the empowerment and development of women at all levels. This dedication to the rights of women has its roots in the solidarity, resistance and protest that characterized the years leading up to and following the historic women's march of 1956," he said. Women were addressed on issues such as the socio-economic challenges in the province, trading opportunities, the role of the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and women development, cross border and global trade opportunities, financial fitness and other relevant topics.

Ms Mabuza, Chairperson, IDC, said that several barriers were identified which black industrialists are faced with when attempting to start or expand businesses. She said that some of them included access to capital, access to markets, skills and capacity.

"IDC's main activity is the provision of industrial finance to businesses throughout the business lifecycle in various sectors aligned with industrial policy priorities as well as developing projects in these industries. In addition, it is involved in other activities such as research, policy inputs and fund management for government departments; non-financial support for business," she said.

Meanwhile, Tamrynne Peyper, a representative from the Consumer Education Department Financial Services Board, said that women are most likely to be responsible for the day-to-day money management of their households and are also largely responsible for raising their families and play a central role in teaching their children financial habits which will take them forward into adulthood.

She added that marriage and dependency on others were not guaranteeing their financially safe future.

"Understanding of financial fitness is critical for women to be financially fit," she said.

Some other organization that are available to assist in funding women to run their businesses are the National Empowerment

Fund, the Department of Small Business Development, Southern Africa Trust, the South African Women in Construction (SAWIC).

Daphney Mona, Chairperson, SAWENA, said that funding and information remained a serious challenge for women and that much hard work needs to be done in order to reach out to them. "This also includes home based care organisations, our local municipalities need to create databases of organisations that serve communities so that they are able to easily get funding and relevant information," she said.

Premier Mabuza said that government would ensure that government programmes are geared to maximize the participation of women-owned businesses in the delivery of services, and also provide specific support packages for women SMMEs and cooperatives in key sectors of the provincial economy, such as agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and mining.

"We believe that this summit will assist us as government in promoting women's economic independence, including employment, and eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women by addressing the structural causes of poverty, ensuring equal access for all women including those in rural areas," he concluded.