

**NEWS EDITORS  
MEDIA STATEMENT  
17 FEBRUARY 2016**

**DEPT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND TRANSPORT RESCUES MUNICIPALITIES WITH PROVISION OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Local Municipalities are strained financially as greater part of municipal resources are directed towards basic services, particularly water and sanitation. This situation means that Local Municipalities are not always able to respond to road maintenance demands. The Department of Public Works Roads and Transport in Mpumalanga, as the custodian of provincial transport infrastructure could not allow the deprivation of transport related services to communities due to the unfortunate situation municipalities find themselves in. It is for this reason that the Department introduced the Municipal Support Programme in a bid to assist municipalities with road maintenance matters, particularly on access roads to public amenities such as schools, hospitals, clinics, etc.

The Community of Tonga is one of the villages reaping the fruits of Municipal Support Programme. The Department is currently building a 0.9 km access road to Tonga hospital at a tune of more than R3 million after the Nkomazi Local Municipality approached the department for assistance.

Construction of the road started in November 2015 and is expected to be completed in May 2016 with at least eight work opportunities. Another road from the municipality which needed immediate attention was the Tonga Block A ring road, where motorists battled to use it due its poor condition. However, the imminent intervention of the department by regravelling the 7km ring road paid off.

Work on both roads has received some positive reaction from local community. Mr Bongani Khoza who owns a cell phone shop next to the access road to hospital commended the work. "I am excited that government is building the road and I expect my business to flourish as people preferred using other routes. According to Bongani, attempts to regravell the road did not change the situation as rainy weather eroded the soil causing major potholes. "However, I am happy because the new tar road will soon be finished and the hardships will soon be over" he added. Ms Selinah Mnisi from Mangweni village added to the compliments. "I use the road daily to check my relative who has been in hospital since last year, but travelling on the road has been unbearable, so we appreciate efforts made by government," she concluded.

**ENDS**

**For more information, kindly contact Mr. David Nkambule on 013 766 6553 or 071 608 1059**