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Public Works, Roads and Transport
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE



Departmental Newsletter

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Issue 19



"Gear Up for Clean Audit," says Nhlengethwa (Page 2)



Page 04

**45 Traffic Learnership Graduates
ready to enforce the law**



Page 05

**Department gives more than
67 minutes in honour of Madiba**



Page 06

A Heritage Day to remember



EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

"Together Moving South Africa Forward"



Editorial Comment



Here is to another instalment of highlights on service delivery. Indeed the festive season breeze is already whistling Christmas carols and the wrinkles of winter are dissolving across the sun rays. Undeniably, we are approaching an exciting episode of the year.

The October Transport Month has officially set off the agenda to curb road accidents and fatalities during this season and beyond. Whilst the key ingredient to road safety is attitude, the Department together with relevant stakeholders will leave no stone unturned when it comes to clamping down on the plight of road carnage.

Highlights of this instalment include amongst others the MEC's maiden Policy and Budget Speech which unleashed the Department's financial muscles to tackle service delivery challenges. The Women's Month celebration where the MEC led our female counterpart on a series of service delivery activations was the cherry on top. Otherwise the expression, *"Wathint' abafazi, wathint' imbokodo,"* should suffice.

The Department also paid tribute to the late statesman, Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. During Mandela Month (July), we experienced an avalanche of activities across the country and internationally that rekindled the spirit of Ubuntu to applaud the 67 years of Madiba's selfless service. The Department equally embraced the President's call to "Clean South Africa" in honour of uTata through various activations throughout the province.

Coming back home, the Department has declared 2014/15 Financial Year, the year of clean audit. The MEC, Ms Dumisile Nhlengethwa officially made the announcement during a departmental Strategic Planning Session on the 7th of August 2014. The past five years of unqualified audit reports have cemented the platform to step up on new heights with confidence.

"Gear Up for Clean Audit," says Nhlengethwa

"Let us double our efforts with vigour and determination to improve the lives of the people of our province in particular, and the country in general." These were the words that summed up the departmental Strategic Planning Session held on the 7th and 8th of August in Mbombela, Nutting House Lodge, which were echoed by the Honourable MEC, Ms Dumisile Nhlengethwa delivering her opening address.

During her speech, the MEC emphasized on various key projects that the Department needs to accomplish in order to address the challenges of service delivery. One of the major targeted goals that the Department has set, is to achieve a clean audit hence

2014/15 Financial Year has been declared the year of clean audit.

"HOD, let me congratulate you and your entire senior management for the improved audit outcomes in the past few financial years. Coupled with that, I want us to double our efforts and add more impetus, among others, to ensure; the clean audit project", emphasized the MEC.

Ms Nhlengethwa also stressed that the Department must also reflect on the fight against corruption, tender fraud and price fixing in infrastructure programmes; job creation and economic growth particularly to address youth unemployment; eradication of mud schools and

payment of suppliers within 30 days.

The Department has taken a stance to ensure that a culture of compliance and accountability prevails. Hence in the past few weeks, the MEC has embarked on various project visits to clamp down on poor service delivery. The MEC also stated categorically during her staff outreach programme that as the Department gears itself towards a clean audit, there will be no time for laxity and complacency in as far as service delivery is concerned.



Senior Management with MEC and members of the Audit Committee during a two day Strategic Planning Session at Nutting House.

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LIGWALAGWALA FM : 19H45 – 20H00
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Although care has been taken to verify the accuracy of information, the editorial team extends sincere apologies for any inaccuracies.

EPWP declaration signed to create 390 000 work opportunities



Attendants listening attentively at the EPWP Summit



Since its inception in 2004, EPWP has been a pillar of job creation.

The Mpumalanga province is steadfast in its stance to create the envisaged 390 000 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) job opportunities within the next five years. In a bid to ensure that this objective is achieved, a declaration has been signed by the MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Ms Dumisile Nhlengethwa together with the Executive Mayors from both district and local municipalities within the province. The signing took place at Gert Sibande District Municipality on the 28th and 29th August 2014 in Ermelo. The declaration compels all implementing agents including municipalities and provincial government departments to adhere to the guiding principles set out on the signed EPWP Provincial Municipal Summit Declaration.

The declaration states amongst others that the provincial Government Departments, municipalities and non-governmental organisations must achieve the Mpumalanga Provincial EPWP Phase 3 target of creating 390 000 work opportunities within the next five year period. It further stated that the identification of EPWP projects should be optimised in the Integrated Development Plans of municipalities. It also reaffirms the implementation of all resolutions taken during the National Summit, MUNIMEC and EPWP Phase 3 roadshow.

In addition, all the EPWP projects must be included on the National and Provincial strategic plans as well as Municipal Integrated Development Plans. It also ensures that all EPWP projects are funded through equitable share instead of relying only on conditional grants.

One of the highlights of the Summit was the keynote address by MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa where she announced that over the next five years, the Province will target economic growth that is above 5% per annum. "Such economic growth will be expected to create approximately 390 000 additional and sustainable work opportunities by 2019. This means that a total of 78 000 work opportunities must be created per annum," she explained. The national target is six million work opportunities within the same period.

The Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District Municipality, Cllr. Mishack Nhlabathi when he delivered his welcoming remarks, expressed his full commitment towards the programme. He said that the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) will support the programme in a bid to reduce the level of high unemployment and eradicate poverty.

The mood at the Summit was

exhilarating when the audience waited in anticipation to listen to testimonies from beneficiaries on how EPWP changed their lives. One of the beneficiaries is Ms Sibongile Shogwe who told the audience how the EPWP Siyatentela project brought relief to members of her family. "I was unemployed for most of my life with five kids. My husband passed away and as a result I had to be a breadwinner in order to support my family. The wage I received

from the EPWP project changed the poverty condition in my house, since I managed to build a house and buy stove and my kids' school uniform. What I am requesting from the Summit is that they should extend the working days for EPWP beneficiaries from three to five days," concluded Ms Shongwe.

The first day of the Summit was concluded when participants broke into commissions where each commission



MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa signing the EPWP Provincial Municipal Summit Declaration.

Continued on Page 04

Continued from Page 03

had to address challenges experienced within the various sectors such as Infrastructure, Social, Environment, Culture and Non-State sectors.

On the second day of the Summit, presentations from the various commissions were delivered. Some of the resolutions taken by the commissions included amongst others that the public bodies should utilize incentive grants for the purpose of the expansion of EPWP. Also, the public bodies should implement National programmes in Provincial spheres, this includes Working for Water. Furthermore, the public bodies should participate in the Non-State sector programme management teams.

A total of 300 delegates attended the Summit from public and private sectors. The main purpose of the Summit was to strategise on how best the Mpumalanga Province can effectively implement EPWP Phase 3, thus create the much needed job opportunities in the province.

The EPWP is a nationwide programme aimed at addressing the high unemployment rate and create the much needed work opportunities in order to reduce poverty. It was introduced in 2004 and has since been a valuable job creation machinery.



Delegates deliberating on the way forward during commissions.

45 traffic learnership graduates ready to enforce the law



Mpumalanga Traffic Learnership during their passout.

The atmosphere was electrifying on Friday the 15th of August 2014 at the graduation ceremony of at least forty seven (47) traffic learnership graduates who successfully completed a one year traffic course at the Limpopo Traffic College. Ululation and cheerful songs were heard from the crowd, as some members of the families were cheering the graduates as they were showcasing some of the moves they learned at the college.

The graduates were later handed over with certificates by the Limpopo MEC for Transport, Safety, Security and Liaison, Ms Mapula Mokaba-

Phukwana. Out of the forty seven (47) graduates, forty five (45) were from Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. The other two (2) graduates were from Govan Mbeki Local Municipality. The graduates were a group of unemployed youth who were recruited by the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport into the learnership programme.

During her address at the event, MEC Mokaba- Phukwana said that the officers should play a critical role in ensuring road safety. "The college has prepared these officers to the level that

they will now be able to fight against the scourge of road fatalities due to non adherence to traffic rules," she explained. According to the Senior Manager for Regulation and Control, Mr Mojalefa Tsotetsi, the graduates will help bolster the law enforcement in the province. "We are hoping that when the Department advertises posts for traffic officers, these graduates will be considered," said Tsotetsi. He added that the Department is steadfast in its stance to curb road carnages, hence the plan to train more traffic officers.

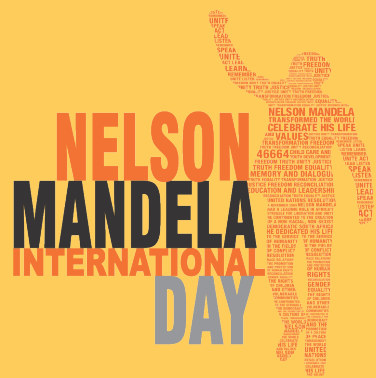
One of the graduates, a 22 year old Ms Prudence Setuke from Ermelo, expressed her excitement about her

prospects of pursuing a career as a traffic officer. "I cannot believe that my dreams of becoming a traffic officer are finally becoming a reality. I am hoping to educate pedestrians and motorists about the importance of adhering to the rules of the road," stated jubilant Setuke.

The Department was well represented by the Head of Department, Mr Kgopana Mohlasedi accompanied by the Senior Manager for Human Resource Management, Ms Rose Mahlalela and that of Regulation and Control, Mr Mojalefa Tsotetsi together with other departmental officials.



MEC Mapula Mokaba-Phukwana (first left) together with HOD Kgopana Mohlasedi (second left) handing over a trophy to one of the best performing students.



Department gives more than 67 minutes in honour of Madiba

Mandela International Day is celebrated annually on the 18th of July in honour of Nelson Mandela. This day was officially declared by the United Nations in November 2009 and the first Mandela Day was held on the 18 of July 2010. This year's celebrations were anchored on the theme "Clean South Africa" as announced by the President in his State of Nation Address on the 17th of June 2014.

The Department embarked on a number of community service delivery projects which included amongst others, patching of potholes, cleaning of taxi ranks, grass cutting, renovation of community centres, grading and cleaning of the streets in the four districts throughout the province. Departmental cost centres situated in various local municipalities also participated.

The provincial event took place on the 18th of July in Nkangala District at Emakhazeni Local Municipality. Provincial departments embarked on a series of service delivery activities. The Department was deployed in Belfast where it had three teams. The first team attended to the patching of potholes at Bhukumuzi Masango Drive; the second team graded several streets at Madala Location whilst the third team was assigned to do grass cutting along the main road in Belfast.

Bohlabela District started Mandela Month Programme by renovating Amass Disable Centre at Acornhoek. The centre looks after more than one hundred disabled children. Officials from Bohlabela District joined together in assisting the centre by replacing the ceiling and painting the building. MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa,

Cllr Ngala from Mbombela Local Municipality together with the Mbombela Taxi Associations joined officials from Head Office and Ehlanzeni District in cleaning of the Mbombela Taxi Rank and patching potholes in and around the Taxi Rank. More than one hundred officials were deployed and divided in various groups with team leaders.

Gert Sibande District celebrated Mandela Day by patching potholes of P26/4 between Ermelo and Breyten at Msukaligwa Local Municipality on the 17th of July. Mr Nkosi from Albert Luthuli Cost Centre, described the initiative as empowering in a sense that not only does it rekindles the spirit of humanity but also gives participants a taste of Madiba's long walk to freedom whilst at the same time benefits the less fortunate. "67 minutes is just not enough, that is why we want to spend the whole day patching potholes with an aim of making a difference in people's lives" said Mr Nkosi.

Nkangala District closed Mandela Month programme by cleaning the White Rose Hospice Centre situated at Emalahleni. This centre looks after the old and sick people. Officials from the District started the day by cleaning the centre including grass cutting. Some assisted by feeding the patients who are unable to feed themselves.

Ms Liezel Oosthuizen who is the Matron at White Rose Hospice Centre, applauded the work done by the Department in honour of Nelson Mandela. "I have never seen such humble people, officials have shown a spirit of Ubuntu" said Ms Oosthuizen.



MEC Nhlengethwa with Ehlanzeni District staff patching potholes at Mbombela Taxi Rank during Mandela Month celebration.



Nkangala District staff cleaning White Rose Hospice at Witbank during the celebration of Mandela Month.



Giving 67 minutes by patching potholes at Shongwe Hospital access road.

A Heritage Day to remember

A ray of sunshine which permeated the skyscrapers of the government complex brought a climbs of hope to a crowd of officials of the department who converged to celebrate the Heritage Day. The sunny condition in the morning aggravated the mood of jubilation, dance and rejoice from the crowd in anticipation of the day ahead. The 23rd of September 2014 is a day which will stay in the hearts and minds of many who were eagerly awaiting to share with their fellow colleagues their heritage, culture and roots.

When the Department made a call for officials to wear traditional attire, little did the organisers know that a two hour event will turn out to be a glorious and memorable day to remember as faces of officials beamed with excitement and appreciation. Ms Gloria "Mashonisa" Theko was lost for words when @work asked her what the day meant for her and how she felt? "The event surpassed my expectation. I am so excited that the department gave us an opportunity to showcase our heritage. I will never forget this beautiful day. Heritage day is critical day in our lives as it reminds us who we are and where we come from" she explained excitedly.

The day was marked by a hive of activities as African music, dance, crafts and games were the major highlights. The captain of the ship, MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa, delivered a phenomenal heritage message. In her address, the MEC expressed her appreciation to officials for honouring the invitation and adhering to the dress code. She explained how government changed the then called Shaka Day into Heritage Day. "When the democratic government came into power, we changed what was known as Shaka day into Heritage Day, so that all ethnic groups can associate, embrace and celebrate their roots. We surely believe that next year's event will be bigger and better than this and maybe we might spice it up with a little bit of *Umqombothi*, said the MEC to the ululation of the crowd.

Mr Pelky Makahane and Ms Lwandle Khoza as programme directors, stirred the ship into the right direction. They kept the audience in stitches as they called different cultural groups to ascent the stage to perform. The Swazi male group rendered an outstanding performance which was joined by the MEC. Some of the groups that gave a beautiful performance were the Swazi female group, Bapedi, Ndebele, Zulu, Venda, Tsonga and Xhosa groups. Mr

Greef from Supply Chain Management represented the Afrikaans community well, as he showcased his cultural attire.

Similar events were held in all the four districts where traditional attires, games, African food and the heritage messages were delivered. At Gert Sibande District, officials were treated to scrumptious meals as officials in the district contributed towards cooking *skopo* (cow's head), *tribe*, *mautwana* (chicken feet) and dumpling.

Tsonga music was the order of the day at Bohlabela district where officials danced to the popular traditional Tsonga songs, after the acting Senior Manager of the district, Mr Piet Phakola delivered a heritage message.

Officials at Ehlanzeni district were also colourful in their traditional African attire, as they posed smilingly to our camera guys. Women at Nkangala district came in numbers wearing their Ndebele outfits, showcasing their roots.

EHLANZENI DISTRICT



HEAD OFFICE



BOHLABELA DISTRICT



GERT SIBANDE DISTRICT



NKANGALA DISTRICT



WOMEN TAKE THE BULL BY ITS HORNS

During Women's Month in August, the Department's female officials led by MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa paid tribute to the women who marched with Charlotte Maxeke in protest against pass laws.

The highlights of activities during the celebration of the Women's Month included donation of sanitary towels at Jacob Mdluli and Louville high schools in Ehlanzeni District; road markings, street cleaning and donations of sanitary towels at Graskop in Bohlabelo District; law enforcement at KwaMhlanga in Nkangala District and donation of sanitary towels at New Ermelo Primary School in Gert Sibande District.

The Department has taken upon itself the responsibility to ensure the empowerment and development of women in all levels. The Women's Month programme is one of the strategic tools that the Department uses to highlight women achievements and empowerment thereof. The

Women's Month Programme of Action further seeks to recognise the good and gallant work done by women. It also aims to tap into the legacy of the 1913 march by coming up with programmes that address the plight of women and young girls hence the donation of sanitary towels to help restore the dignity of many who cannot afford.

During these activities, the Department found that some women have a good story to tell though a lot is still to be done. They are well represented in all sectors especially in construction. For instance, in some communities, construction is still regarded as a job only designed for men but for Ms Thandi Mlambo, being a construction worker is the only job she's ever enjoyed.

At times, she had to report to the foreman who told her they preferred working with men, but that only motivated her to work harder. "I had to prove I was worth it and that I was



Departmental females patching potholes during Women's Month.



Bohlabela staff painting road markings at Graskop during Women's Month Celebration.



MEC Nhlengethwa parading with Transport Inspectorate team after Law Enforcement Operation.



MEC Nhlengethwa and other officials took on Law Enforcement Operations by themselves during the celebration of Women's Month.

the best candidate for the job. I always believe that the sky is the limit and the Department has grown into a diverse organisation that has opened doors for the growth of its female employees. Whenever the opportunity for growth and development presents itself, I grab it unhesitantly," explained Ms Mlambo who is another reason why women are still called Imbokodo (the rock).

As we recall the bravery of the more than 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings on the 09th of August 1956 to present a petition demanding the end of discriminatory pass laws, women's month pays tribute to the contribution of our mothers and sisters who fought for our liberation. We have moved decisively from a reality where women suffered oppression based on their gender, colour and class, to one where gender equality is now a constitutional imperative. Our Constitution, which has been

hailed as the most progressive in the world, borrows its thesis from both the Women's Charter and Freedom Charter.

The Women's Charter, which was incorporated in the 1955 Freedom Charter, called for the removal of unjust laws, regulations and conventions deemed repressive to women. The preamble of the Charter proclaimed: *"We, the women of South Africa, wives and mothers, working women and housewives, African, Indians European and Coloured, hereby declare our aim of striving for the removal of all laws, regulations, conventions and customs that discriminate against us as women, and that deprive us in any way of our inherent right to the advantages, responsibilities and opportunities that society offers to any one section of the population."*

Youth Benefit From Roadshow



Youth attending the Youth Roadshow at Phiva.

The Department embarked on a youth roadshow. The roadshow was targeting the unemployed youth to empower them with information and services offered by various stakeholders. It was held in various areas around Mpumalanga including Phiva at Ehlanzeni District, Hluvhukani at Bohlabela District, Amersfoort at Gert Sibande District and Mammetlake at Nkangala District.

During the roadshow that was held at Phiva on the 18th of June 2014, about 100 unemployed youth attended. The youth could not hold back their excitement. The day started with registration from young men and women who had an urge for what lied ahead. Various stakeholders including the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), LoveLife, South African National Cancer Association (SANCA), Department of Health, Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism and Department of Social Development made presentations on opportunities that exist for unemployed youth.

Some of the topics that received much applaud from the youth included a presentation on HIV/Aids and business opportunities from NYDA and the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. The attention the presentations received gave a clear indication that the youth is really hungry for information that can change

their lives for the better. The NYDA presentation which concentrated more on the Youth Development Programme was the highlight of the day. The Youth Development Programme helps young people with career guidance, pros and cons of preparing a Curriculum Vitae (CV) and an interview. Training programmes and scholarship opportunities are also offered.

Speaking to Ms Thandi Maziko, the Manager for Change Management in the Department, she elaborated on the motive behind the roadshow. ***"The idea was motivated by the State of the Province Address where the Premier outlined that government has to ensure that unemployment amongst the youth is addressed. Therefore, as a Department we met with the various stakeholders to develop an integrated strategy***

to ensure that the youth is recruited and placed somewhere. The roadshow is targeting 100 unemployed youth with Grade 12 and post-matric qualifications in all the districts in Mpumalanga", said Ms Maziko.

Ms Maziko further explained that the project started in June 2014 and it will run until the 31st of March 2015. As a pilot project of the Department, the team will meet regularly to assess the progress in terms of placement of the youth who attended the roadshow. Some will be assisted to obtain bursaries, form co-operatives and some to take advantage of employment opportunities.

When we asked on how this project is different from other youth empowerment programmes initiated by the Department, Ms Maziko

explained that the National Youth Service for an example is more focused on co-operatives and skill development. However, this project focuses more on the placement of the youth in permanent employment, internship and learnership programmes.

Ms Thandi Maziko also mentioned that all stakeholders have agreed to ensure that the project achieves its target by March 2015. "We have created a database for the youth that have attended the roadshow. The stakeholders will meet in September to assess the progress. The database will be used to motivate for the placement of those who qualify for bursaries, internships, learnerships as well as permanent employment," she concluded.

Mr Sbusiso Khoza, one of the young people who attended the roadshow at Phiva could not hide his excitement about the roadshow. "I am so happy about what the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport has initiated and the fact that they chose Phiva. It is really sad that most of the youth in Phiva is unemployed and there is a high crime rate. These kinds of programmes assist us a lot and it is a first time that such event happens in our area. Most of the time events happen at Tonga and the well-known villages but we are happy that the Department has remembered us. We now know which doors to knock at when we need help in terms of co-operatives and business opportunities. Not only that but in terms of health issues we have been informed on the dangers of drug abuse and where to get help. We have also been given information on how to live a healthy lifestyle. We now also know about the bursaries that are offered in various departments for those who want to further their studies. The roadshow was really an eye-opener which helped us a lot. What also excited me the most is the fact that there will be a follow up strategy to track our progress", concluded the excited Sbusiso.



Youth came in numbers to the Roadshow at Amersford.

MEC tables budget to address community needs

@Work was out in the streets of Lowveld, asking the public what to expect from the 2014/15 Policy and Budget Speech. The most pressing issues that the public was concerned about were potholes, taxi conflicts, road fatalities, unemployment rate as well as scholar transport, which recently made headlines.

One of the interviewees whom we spoke to was Mr Collen Nkosi who works at Wimpy franchise in White River. He explained that the Department has to intensify its law enforcement operations in a bid to curb the road fatalities.

"It is very much worrying to see people dying on the roads on daily basis and seemingly little is being done to avert the situation. I would like to advise the MEC to introduce a policy where all public transport vehicles including busses and minibus taxis would be compelled to undergo inspection on regular basis. This should be conducted at least on a three month interval, so that the public transport is safe and reliable," he stressed.

Ms Christabel Marshall a mother of two from Pienaar said that the MEC needs to prioritize job creation. "We do not want to depend on government handouts. Instead we need decent jobs where we can be able to work and earn a living. I think the MEC must put more effort in promoting corporatives where women would plough vegetables and sell to the established businesses or the School Nutrition Programme," urged Marshall.

The citizens of the province waited eagerly on the 25th of July 2014 for MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa's maiden Policy and Budget Speech which was broadcast live on Ikwewezi fm, Ligwalagwala fm and Bushbuckridge Community Radio.

MEC Nhlengethwa did not disappoint in her address as she covered most of the concerns raised by the public during her speech. Addressing the packed legislature gallery, the creation of job opportunities; provision of quality roads and building infrastructure as well as the provision of a safe and reliable public transport including scholar transport was the cornerstone of her speech.

JOB CREATION THROUGH EPWP

In her speech, MEC highlighted that the Expanded Public Works Programme has created a total of 230 050 job opportunities between the 1st of April 2009 and the 31st of March 2014. "The EPWP will continue to tackle youth unemployment as articulated by the Honourable Premier, Mr D.D. Mabuza



MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa (lime dress) with her guests after the tabling of the Policy and Budget.

during his State of the Province Address (SOPA). Furthermore, the Department will host the EPWP PHASE 3 Provincial Municipal Summit where a comprehensive monitoring and report method will be introduced in order to address some of the challenges which the Department faced during EPWP Phase 2," explained the MEC. She further mentioned that the Department has imparted skill to the unemployed youth through cooperatives.

"We have established sixteen (16) National Youth Services Cooperatives in the previous financial year, thus creating a total

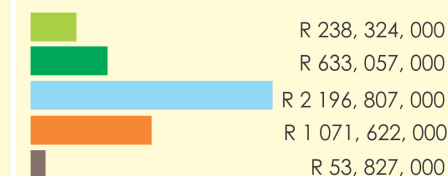
of 350 work opportunities for the unemployed. In addition, we have appointed a total of 40 learner contractors under the Sakh'abakhi programme in order to address the issue of skills shortage," elaborated MEC Nhlengethwa.

INTERVENTION OF GOVERNMENT ON MOLOTO ROAD AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr Nkosi from White River, who raised concerns regarding road fatalities, will be happy to know that the Department is working closely with the National Department of Transport to address road fatalities.

Budget Made EASY

- Administration
- Public Works
- Transport Infrastructure
- Transport Operations
- Community Based Programme



TOTAL: R 4 193, 637, 000



A school infrastructure project completed by the Department in Delmas.

Continued on Page 14

Continued from Page 13



MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa (Orange Top) with HOD KM Mohlasedi (Black Suite) and Executive Mayor Salome Sithole (Black Dress) opening Road P120/1 Between Emalahleni and Kriel.

On the issue of the notorious Moloto road, MEC Nhlengethwa announced that the long term solution would be the construction of the Rapid Rail Service. However, an interim measure has been announced which includes the transfer of R573 road to South African National Road Agency (SANRAL). She added that expansion of the road is underway.

MEC Dumisile expressed concerns on the recent interruption of scholar transport in certain areas. "The position of the Department is steadfast that as much as we respect the rights of service providers to protest, the rights of learners to go to school should be equally protected. We are working on mechanisms to speedily resolve the impasse," she assured members.

Accessibility to socio-economic services such as health facilities, schools and shopping centres remain the epitome under which the majority of the rural population have to experience daily. This is attributed by the high level of poverty, poor infrastructure and limited transport infrastructure. In a bid to address this major challenge, the Department will inject R42.5 million to ensure easy mobility within the rural municipality in the next Medium Term Strategic Framework.

MEC explained that in the 2014/15 financial year, the Department will build the following Integrated Rural Mobility and Accessibility (IRMA) projects: culvert bridge at Ntuda 1 and 2, footbridge at Ronaldsey, Bus shelters

at Mbombela and Simotlasi.

ROAD NETWORK IS THE CORE OF ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

MEC Nhlengethwa announced that the province will improve the provincial roads at a cost of R2.1 billion in the current financial year. She further identified some of the strategic roads which are due for construction in the 2014/15 financial year which include amongst others the upgrading of a 2km road between Sibange and Masibekela and the construction of a bridge across the Komati river. The road construction of the 15km D545 road between Dullstroom and Kruisfontein as well as the construction of a Bethal Traffic Control Centre.

She added that the Department has made available a total of R848 million to fund the rehabilitation and repair of roads on the coal haulage grid. "A total of R976 million will be spent on the maintenance of roads," the MEC added.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

On the issue of public infrastructure, MEC Nhlengethwa announced that the Department adopted the Infrastructure Delivery Management System (IDMS) aimed at improving planning, budgeting, procurement, delivery, maintenance, operation; monitoring and evaluation of building infrastructure projects. "The tool will help improve the building infrastructure value chain," she emphasized.

She further explained that the Department will construct projects for the six client departments which include amongst others, eighty eight (88) projects scheduled for the Department of Education, thirty three (33) for Health, three (3) for Social Development, six (6) for Culture, Sports and Recreation, one (1) for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism as well as one (1) for Community Safety, Security and Liaison.

During her address, the MEC said that a total of R25 million has been made available for the maintenance of Agovernment buildings and that the Department continues to update the Immovable Assets Register when new assets are identified are procured.



One of the foot bridges constructed by the department.

A day in a life of a Cost Centre Manager



Cost Centre Manager, Mr Paulus Molefe and his maintenance staff hard at work.

The Cost Centre Manager of Dr J.S Moroka 1 is hard at work. Mr Paulus Molefe is the man in charge of Dr J.S Moroka 1 Cost Centre in Nkangala District, under the directorship of Mr S.A. Mbatha. His duties are to manage the maintenance of government buildings such as schools, clinics and state owned properties. He is also tasked with the responsibility of managing the construction of minor projects on schools, clinics and other departmental buildings. These minor projects often include the construction of school assembly shelters, toilets, store rooms, strong rooms and septic tanks amongst others.

Mr Molefe who hails from Marapyane, Nkangala District is a married father of two. He started his technical career at Prince CN Mahlangu FET college in 1986, where he obtained his theory and practical N1 and N2 certificate. He proceeded to Shikoane Matlala

Technical College in Seshego, Limpopo province where he obtained his N3 and N4 certificate in Civil Engineering. In 1991 he was appointed by the former Kwa-Ndebele government as an apprentice in bricklaying. He was later appointed as an Artisan Superintendent by the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in 1998 after passing his trade test. Mr Molefe was then awarded a bursary by the Department in 2004 to proceed with his N5 and N6 Engineering studies.

The theoretical principles and practice in bricklaying assisted him in the betterment and advancement of his knowledge in Civil Engineering that is Quantity Surveying, Building Administration, Structural Construction (design) and Structural Surveying. He was compelled by the above programmes to be trained and qualify as a bricklayer.

Mr Molefe stated that he keeps his fellow

colleagues motivated by giving them praises for work well done where it is due. "Our staff are trained practically on our workshop and are sent to training institutions to advance their skills," said Mr Molefe. Ninety percent (90%) of these staff members pass the trade test and are therefore appointed to various cost centres within and outside the district. This serves as a motivation to other staff members. He offers advice and assist his staff members when and where necessary on their social challenges such as alcohol and drug addiction rehabilitation and career guidance.

One of the employees is Ms Betty Mahlangu whose son was a drug addict who used to smoke Nyaope. "I am very happy that my son is drug free due to the help of Mr Molefe. He is now living a normal life like other kids," stated Ms Mahlangu. Ms Mahlangu's performance at work has now also

improved outstandingly.

Mr Molefe always encourages the Cost Centre management as well as the support staff to participate in school governing bodies, ward committees, religious committees, trade unions, liberation movements and moreover to participate as disciplined public servants. He cited that his staff should serve the community with the understanding that they are doing service delivery. What motivates him is patriotism and the appreciation letters received from client departments and the community at large.

Amongst the projects that have been completed by the Cost Centre, is the infrastructure of Phake Home Base Care, renovation of Kwaggafontein creche, construction of pit toilets and water closet at Makopanong Primary School, Ekageng Primary School and Thabang High School amongst others. The Cost Centre is currently busy with several projects which include the construction of an assembly shelter at Masinakane Special School of children living with disabilities, partitioning of workshops and also transferring skills to learners to maintain their own schools.

He also has an added responsibility of transferring skills to participants of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and the National Youth Service (NYS) learnership programmes. These projects address poverty alleviation and also play a vital role in job creation. The number of people living in absolute poverty has been slashed by the establishment of these programmes. More than 100 candidates benefited from the programmes and has moved to greater heights since its inception in 1994.

Mr Molefe has a sense of humour but he bets he would never do well as a comedian. He says that he was built to transfer technical skills and serving underprivileged people. He takes pride on having a progressive staff that enshrine service delivery in their hearts and the opportunity to manage a well established Cost Centre. Mr Molefe has a good story to tell on the maintenance of government buildings especially attending to smaller construction projects which may seem small but have a big impact in the lives of people. His long term goal is to eradicate poverty and unemployment through transferring technical skills in electrical, civil and mechanical engineering.

“It is Business Usual”, MEC Nhlengethwa tells staff

“There is a much bigger responsibility of fighting poverty, inequality and unemployment within our society and this Department is committed to address these challenges”, stated MEC Dumisile Goodness Nhlengethwa during a staff outreach programme held on the 14th of July 2014 at Swanepoel Stadium, Ermelo, Gert Sibande District.

The MEC was addressing staff members as well as the Senior Management of the Department. During the month of August, the MEC visited the four departmental district offices that include Ehlanzeni, Bohlabele, Gert Sibande to address staff members.

The ultimate objective of the outreach programme was to introduce the MEC to all staff members and set the agenda for the new administration. Staff members were encouraged to perform their duties at their utmost best, in order to ensure service delivery.

During her address, MEC Nhlengethwa mentioned that the Department should use the principles of employment equity to attract more females in the senior management levels, develop strategies to retain essential skills, and bridge the communication gap that exist between senior management and staff members.

She emphasized the importance of investing in capital projects that will keep the economy growing and provide much needed employment. “Such infrastructure development requires integrated planning that will take into account the projected infrastructure demands and economic growth.

The MEC gave emphasis on her commitment of strengthening service delivery through major changes that need to take place to shape the future of the Department. According to the MEC, there will be no “business as usual” way of doing things and there will be equally no space for laxity whilst people are still without proper access roads, schools and health care facilities.



FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: Staff members attentively listening to the MEC during the staff outreach programme.

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