

ADDRESS BY MEC T. MOHLALA
DURING THE SEKHUKHUNE
DISTRICT FORUM LAUNCH.

Date : Tuesday, 28 August 2012

Time : 10:00

Venue : Tubatse Civic Centre, Tubatse
Municipality

His Worship Executive Mayor

Mayors

Speakers

Chief Whips

Members of Mayoral Committees

Councillors

Traditional Leaders

Head of Department

Senior Management Members from our Public
Works Regional Office

Senior Management Members from Public
Works

Public Works staff members

Members of the media

Distinguished guests

Programme Director

Good Morning

I am grateful to stand before you here today, as we launch our second EPWP District Forum – Sekhukhune EPWP District Forum. It gives me great pleasure that we are here today to forge ahead our mandate of serving our people. You were present at the national EPWP summit last year, and it should not come as a surprise as to why the launch, since one of the resolutions at the summit was that EPWP District Forums must be launched in all municipalities of this country. Limpopo is no exception. Exactly fourteen (14) days ago, we launched our first EPWP District Forum in Waterberg, and the aim is one, to enhance and ensure the political oversight in the implementation of EPWP.

Today's launch comes just over two months (45 days) following the successful provincial EPWP summit held in Polokwane. The support and attendance by municipalities was overwhelming. I wish all the Mayors from this district could have been able to attend as the summit was very fruitful.

His Worship Executive Mayor, the summit was very important as it has paved ways and has had municipalities committed to the implementation of EPWP from here henceforth. This will enable us as politicians to play the oversight role from a much informed position, and thus improving on providing services within our institutions,

thereby responding to the adequate provision of services in our communities.

I would not like to go too deep into the summit, but I am convinced that all of us here today are now clearer in terms of what EPWP is, what its intentions are and what is expected from us. The one thing that stood out from the summit was that for this programme, EPWP, to succeed, there needs to be total political oversight. It is one of the main reasons we are here today, to say as the political leadership, let us drive this programme in its right direction. The launching of District Forums is part of the implementation of the resolutions from the national EPWP summit held last November.

This conscious decision was taken to strengthen participation of municipalities and to ensure that Incentive Agreement Protocols signed by Mayors and the Minister are adequately implemented.

Colleagues, I am convinced that when all political leaders from municipalities are on board in terms of what EPWP is, and its intentions are, there would be nothing stopping us from making EPWP a success.

The provincial EPWP summit committed municipalities to plan in advance in order to access the Incentive Grant well in time and reporting accordingly.

Honourable Mayors will on a quarterly basis receive communiqués informing them how their municipalities are performing. This will assist you to monitor whether reporting is done properly and whether there is improvement in job creation. Honourable Mayors, let it be our role and commitment to give direction to this programme. The EPWP, which is aimed at alleviating poverty and addressing unemployment challenges, helps us as leaders elected by our people to provide them with the decent life they deserve.

In the beginning of June this year, the national Portfolio Committee on Public Works was here in the province for its oversight mandate, where municipalities in the province, made presentations on progress made regarding implementation of EPWP Phase-2 and Asset Register. It is a known fact that our Asset Register is in shambles, I therefore appeal to you to help us get all government properties registered.

Colleagues, it is our collective responsibility to serve our people, as we promised to do so during elections. The implementation of the EPWP Phase-2 started well and is gaining momentum,

but I would like to emphasise on what we need to do in order to get it right in terms of our contribution towards the provincial work opportunities target of four-hundred and forty-one thousand 993 (441, 993) and ultimately the national target of 4, 5 million by 2014/15.

Another reason we are launching this EPWP District Forum here today, is that our municipalities are major roles players in the implementation for the EPWP projects and in job creation, particularly such that our municipalities in this province are mainly rural and the EPWP agenda is focusing on that.

One of the resolutions that came out of the recently held provincial EPWP summit is that it is our duty and responsibility to maximise on opportunities available in all EPWP sectors to create the so much needed jobs, so that indeed poverty can be alleviated.

Honourable Mayors, Currently the Infrastructure Sector is leading in terms of creation of work opportunities, despite underreporting and under-utilisation of incentive grants by municipalities. This clearly indicates that the launching of district forums and the increased enthusiasm and commitment by municipalities will be taking Limpopo to the top nationally as far as EPWP is concerned.

Let us be innovative in all the other sectors in order to employ majority of the needy in our constituencies. The launching of this District Forum, which is going to happen in all other three districts of our province, is for us to find a common ground in terms of co-ordination, implementation and oversight of these EPWP projects.

It is our collective responsibility to do proper planning on job creation, provide jobs to the most needy and do adequate reporting on the work opportunities created through these projects. We need municipalities since these projects are there, closer to the people.

We need municipalities fully on board since they have MIG grants and other capital projects budgets, where labour intensive methods can be used to create more jobs. Municipalities are also closer to the people and are the face of our government hence the prioritisation.

One of the tasks of this forum will be to liaise with Department of Public Works and get the resolutions of the provincial EPWP summit, so that all their plans and efforts can be towards implementing the resolutions while strengthening the EPWP. I therefore, call upon His Worship Executive Mayor and all the Mayors to roll up your sleeves from this day forward,

in ensuring that we exceed our provincial target of one-hundred and two thousand, 763 (102 763) work opportunities for the Financial Year 2012/13.

As the province we managed to exceed the previous financial year target which was seventy-seven thousand and five (77 005), by forty-eight thousand, one-hundred and seven (48 107) to reach one-hundred and twenty-five thousand, six hundred and twelve (125 612) work opportunities created. This proves that we can, if we want to.

From the presentation by Head of Department, Mr Chaamano earlier, we heard of the 25% work opportunities created in this district municipality in the previous financial year. We can do more colleagues. I would also call upon all political leaders present here, that from now onwards, EPWP becomes a permanent agenda item in all your meetings. This will ensure the consistent and strong political oversight and support needed for the success of EPWP Phase-2.

In closing, I would like for each and every one of us present here today, to always remember that, every project is an EPWP project. His Worship Executive Mayor, Mayors,

the current Local Government slogan is that “*Together We Can Build Better Communities*”, therefore the ball is in our court, let us rise to the occasion and make our communities better.

Thank you.