

**SPEECH BY THE MEC RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HONOURABLE AZWINNDINI JEREMIAH DINGAAN NDOU ON THE OCCASION TO MARK THE OFFICIAL SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME PROTOCOL AGREEMENT WITH MUNICIPALITIES ON THE 25<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2014 AT THE BOLIVIA LODGE, POLOKWANE.**

Thank you Programme Director, Polokwane Chief Whip

MEC for COGHSTA, Honourable Makoma Makhurupetje

MEC for Sport, Arts and Culture, Honourable Nandi Ndalane

Executive mayor of Capricorn District Municipality, Cllr Gilbert Kganyago

Executive mayor of the hosting municipality, Cllr Thembi Nkadimeng

Mayors of local municipalities

Provincial Secretary of the ruling party, Cde Nocks Seabi

Acting Head of Department, Mr. Walter Mothapo

Senior management and staff of the department

Municipal managers present

Invited guests

Members of the media

Ladies and gentlemen

This event marks an important milestone in the history of the Expanded Public Works Programme, for EPWP was launched in the province of Limpopo 10 years ago in the village called Sekunyani, outside Giyani by former president Thabo Mbeki in 2004. The choice of Limpopo was very strategic because the provincial government had already taken the initiative to implement a labour intensive provincial roads programme called “Gundo Lashu”.

The provincial government teamed up with all the municipalities in the province, like we are gathered here tonight, to expand this programme to the municipal infrastructure sector. So we have every reason to raise our glasses in celebration of ten successful years of promoting economic growth, facilitating sustainable development, alleviating poverty and providing income relief through temporary work on socially useful projects.

When the Premier of our Province delivered his State of the Province Address, he said that the province plans to create 426 000 job opportunities over the five year period. This is the commitment that calls upon each one of us to ensure that it becomes a reality.

Through our Expanded Public Works Programme, the department is well positioned to contribute significantly towards the Premier's target. It is also possible to even beat the target before the end of the five year period, and we can only achieve this if we strengthen our monitoring of this project, which has the potential to eradicate poverty from the face of society.

Programme Director

Tonight we gather here to re-commit ourselves to service delivery by signing EPWP Protocol Agreements with all Municipalities.

Because this programme is about job creation, it therefore makes sense to have a Five Year Targets set. Tonight, we must collectively commit to achieve the EPWP Work Opportunities target in the next five years through projects that maximize job creation in our communities.

As we celebrate 20 years of freedom and democracy in our country, we must forge ahead with the creation of job opportunities in the public sector to continue with the success story that has emerged thereof.

Through the Labour Intensive Expanded Public Works Programme we must give hope and relief from the claws of poverty to thousands of our people in the province.

As the department this is the task that we must commit to implement successfully for we cannot rest as long as there are those among us who go to bed on an empty stomach.

In his State of the Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma re-emphasized the critical role EPWP continues to play and he said “EPWP and Community Works Programme continue to be an effective cushion for the poor and the youth”.

It is because of this critical role that a Strategy Paper for EPWP Phase 3 for the period 2014/15 to 2018/19, which provides strategic objectives, targets and framework for the phase, has been approved by National Cabinet. Challenges and lessons learnt in the implementation of the first two phases of the programme with remedial actions as outlined in the EPWP Summit resolutions should provide guidance to all government bodies in the successful implementation of EPWP Phase 3.

The coordination and implementation of EPWP in the province has been successful and this is evident in the number of national accolades Limpopo Province has received during the National Kamoso Awards. Since 2009 to date, EPWP in the province has won a total of 18 National Kamoso Awards, 6 in Social Sector, 8 in Environment, 3 in Infrastructure and 1 in Non-State Sector. The

Non-State Sector recognizes the province as the best in the implementation of projects in this sector.

As we host this Third Provincial EPWP Summit which coincides with the official launch of Phase 3 of the programme, we hope that together with all the role players, the winning legacy will be sustained with more awards.

The overall objective of this Third Provincial EPWP Summit is to share knowledge, experience and best practices gained from the previous EPWP Phases, as a means of promoting EPWP Phase III within all ranks of all participating agencies.

Programme director,

General lack of properly established working relations had always hindered development between the provincial government and municipalities, who by their own nature are the centres of gravity in terms of delivery of essential service. It is within this context that we should continue to strive for the spirit of cooperative governance for successful implementation of our programmes.

I therefore believe that the provincial government owes it to our constitutional mandate to help strengthen and build capacity for municipalities so that they can adequately discharge their responsibilities, more especially in terms of programmes like this.

But we are pleased that as a province we stand to reap enormous benefits from the fact that we have made strides to forge long-standing relationships with government departments. We believe that forums are going to be established to specifically look at this programme.

My clarion call to all stakeholders is to participate fully in this programme, especially the municipalities who are at the coal face of service delivery. We have recorded a notable progress in the first and second phase, and going forward let us ensure that everyone including the less fortunate reap the rewards that come with EPWP.

Politically we will provide support, oversee and monitor progress in the implementation of this programme.

I wish all the commissions everything of the best as they will be going all out to discuss the challenges and successes experienced within EPWP so as to pave the way forward for a smooth implementation throughout our province.

I THANK YOU

RE A LEBOGA

RO LIVHUWA.

INKOMO