

**ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO AMBASSADOR
CHUPU MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE
LAUNCH OF EPWP PHASE 3 AT TOMPI SELEKA COLLEGE
OF AGRICULTURE IN SEKHUKHUNE DISTRICT**

01 September 2015

Programme director, MEC Jeremiah Ndou,
Mong mabu, Mokgoma Maserumule Matlala,
MECs who are present with us today,
Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality, Cllr
Mogobo Magabe,
The Mayor of Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality, Cllr Yvonne
Mmakola and other Councillors present today,
Management and students of the Tompi Seleka College of
Agriculture,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thobela!

I am delighted to join the people of Ephraim Mogale during this important ceremony which marks the launch of our EPWP Phase 3.

As you know, EPWP is about job opportunities for our people.

Today's launch is therefore in line with the objectives of the National Development Plan that of ***'providing work opportunities and income support to poor and unemployed people through the labour-intensive delivery of public and community assets and services, thereby contributing to development'***.

At national level, the EPWP Phase 3 targets to create 6.38 million work opportunities which would be equivalent to 2.56 million Full Time Equivalent jobs in a period of five years.

Of these jobs, as Limpopo we are expected to contribute **Seven Hundred and four thousand, nine hundred and eighty one** which is about 11% contribution.

Programme director,

You would know that in the past 21 years of our freedom and democracy, the government has made some remarkable progress in the socio-economic upliftment of our people.

We have in the past twenty one years as government managed to:

- Ensure that over ninety six percent of learners in our province are benefiting from the No-Fee School Policy,

- We have electrified over 87% of households,
- We have connected about of household with safer drinking water and
- We have build houses for thousands of our people.

However, **Programme Director**, we have also said to our people, that without regard to the many achievements we have recorded in the short period of 21 years, the haunting legacy of apartheid still remain.

This legacy is mostly manifested through socio-economic inequalities, poverty and joblessness.

The Phase 3 of the Expanded Public Works Programme, which we are officially launching today, is therefore part of government's multi-faceted approach of dealing with these inherited problems of inequality, lack of jobs and poverty.

The EPWAP is a comprehensive inter-governmental, people-centred programme developed program.

The central aim of the project is to relieve our people of the dehumanising yoke of poverty and joblessness. This is indeed a strategic partnership to create a better life for all.

In the context of infrastructure development, this government will continue to focus more on the rehabilitation and maintenance of aging road infrastructure, especially those that connects the major economic towns of the province.

We should never be misunderstood to be saying that EPWAP is a master-key to all our challenges of unemployment. Our view is that EPWP is a link in a chain of many initiatives aimed at creating work opportunities and improving the skills levels of our people.

The focus of this Programme is therefore the unemployed, particularly those who are marginalized from the mainstream of our economy.

One of the pillar-marks of our EPWP programme is a large-scale expansion of the use of labour-intensive construction methods in the construction of our public infrastructure.

Our commitment as government is to employ local people who will apart from taking something home in a form of a salary will also benefit from skills transfer.

We can therefore say with absolute certainty that the people of this area stand to benefit directly from this 3rd phase of EPWP programme.

Programme director,

I want to urge our people not to be destructed by those who have suddenly found a reason to criticise the job opportunities which are availed through EPWP programme.

It can indeed be very easy to criticise if you have only read about poverty, those of us who know poverty we know very well that half a bread is better than nothing.

I have no doubt that majority of our people appreciate the relentless efforts of their government to release them from the clutches of unemployment and poverty.

Those who theorise about poverty can continue to theorise, our task as government is practical solutions that are aimed at fighting poverty.

We will do everything we can do to assist households to put bread on the table.

As I conclude, let me reiterate, as a living fact that, today is surely much better than yesterday, and that together we can make tomorrow to be even better.

Let us all work together in this struggle to create jobs and end poverty.

I thank you.