



## **KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

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Media Statement by the MEC for Human Settlements and Public Works, Hon. Neliswa Peggy Nkonyeni MPL in her capacity as chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Cluster on Social Protection, Community and Human Development (SPCHD)

Friday, 1 May 2020

Source: Kiru Naidoo, Ministry of Human Settlements and Public Works, KZN, 0829408163

With thirty days to the projected phased re-opening of schools, a readiness plan dominated the agenda of KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Cluster on Social Protection, Community and Human Development (SPCHD) convened on Friday, 1 May 2020.

The cluster brings together the MECs responsible for Social Development; Human Settlements and Public Works; Education; Agriculture and Rural Development; Health; Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs; Arts, Culture, Sports and Recreation together with their senior officials.

“By working in cluster teams, we have broken the silo mentality and are able to mobilise government resources and service delivery more efficiently,” said the chairperson Neliswa Peggy Nkonyeni who is also the MEC for Human Settlements and Public Works.

The cluster concept predates the COVID-19 pandemic and supports the District Development Model of “one district, one plan, one budget” launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa in KwaMashu last September.

Using the example of water provision at schools, Nkonyeni showed how the cluster was able to pull together the different role players in a single sitting. “COGTA is responsible for water while Public Works manages the infrastructure, Health instructs on the hygiene protocol and teachers from Education are at the coalface of implementation of those protocols,” added Nkonyeni.

Several thousand people working on the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) will be drafted in for cleaning services and maintaining hygiene at schools. Public Works is responsible for the overall coordination of EPWP in the Province.

“As government, we are distressed about the vandalism of 239 schools in the Province which poses a serious threat to teaching and learning,” said Nkonyeni. She added that further details on contingency measures and school security will be provided by the MEC for Education in due course.

The cluster also received reports on the measures to relieve social distress especially the distribution of food hampers to vulnerable people. The distribution sites were identified by the District Command Councils set up in the municipalities.

Nkonyeni also indicated concern about the wellbeing child-headed households. “The cluster welcomed the recommendation that when schools re-opened food hampers be provided to child-headed households,” she added.

From the onset of the pandemic, the various clusters have been reporting into the Provincial Command Council chaired by Premier Sihle Zikalala. Nkonyeni said that the various reports and implementations plans from the social cluster will be tabled before the provincial body later this morning.

Ends