

REMARKS BY MEC FOR PUBLIC WORKS KZN MRS LYDIA JOHNSON AT THE LAUNCH OF INGWAVUMA SOCIAL & ECONOMIC CLUSTER PROJECTS

17 June 2007

Programme Director

Colleagues from the Provincial Legislature:

MEC for Local Government, Housing & Traditional Affairs,

Mr. Michael Mabuyakhulu

MEC for Transport , Community and Liaison,

Mr. Bheki Cele

Chairperson of KZN Works Portfolio Committee – Mr. J. Vilane

HODs for the various departments

Officials for the various departments

Ladies and Gentlemen

The South African Government has shown its desire and commitment to fulfilling its constitutional obligations to the citizens of this country.

Through our interaction with ordinary citizens and other stakeholders in our historical province of KwaZulu-Natal, the need to provide services in an integrated manner emerged as a priority.

The MPCC programme of government is a very comprehensive one and a good example of how successfully government departments from local, provincial and national levels can work together with parastatals, and community groups to make development a reality.

As a Provincial Government we are gathered here at Umfithi to respond to people's needs of this Province particularly the people of Ingwavuma. The MPCC we are launching today aims at alleviating poverty through job creation, skills development and local economic development.

The Ingwavuma MPCC and Bhekamankengane Creche are some of the projects within the programme that comprises of (12) multi-purpose centers namely:

- KwaMthethwa
- Bergville
- KwaJama
- Molefe
- Makhabeleni
- Obuka
- Ingwavuma/Mfithi
- Ndabeni
- Shoba-Ndlanzi
- KwaDukuza
- Sonkombo and Mbongolwane HIV/AIDS centre.

The Ingwavuma MPCC and Bhekamankengane Creche form part of Asisebenze Poverty Alleviation Programme. The MPCC structure will be utilized for community based activities such as arts and craft, meetings, workshops, SMMEs and other initiatives. Out of this programme 12 MPCCs

were constructed and they are based in various municipalities namely: Ntambanana, Umhlathuze, Ezinqoleni, KwaMbonambi, KwaDukuza, Jozini, Nquthu, Dukuza and Ndwedwe. The MPCCs were identified by the Dept of Works and the IDT was appointed as a PIA responsible for implementation management, capacity building, procurement of service providers and material and further ensure that the EPWP i.e. (60% women 20% youth and 2% disabled) targets are achieved.

Gone are those days when ordinary citizens and our elders have to travel long distances to access government and social services. The Umfithi MPCC will bring together different services in one area. People will be able to walk few minutes from their home to access services that will be provided at the MPCC and benefit them.

The MPCC consist of 1 office, sewing room, computer room, 2 stalls, reception area, kitchenette and a hall. The budget allocated to the MPCC was approx. R1, 7M and 17% was utilized for professional fees and the crèche was allocated approx. R500 000, the total budget is R2, 200 000.00.

I want to thank the community of Ingwavuma for their participation during the implementation process in terms of facilitating the identification of local labour and local suppliers. Out of this process approximately 70 jobs were created and 51% (i.e 35) were women, 31% (22) were youth and there were no disabled people engaged in the project because of the nature of work on site.

In terms of capacity building the Project Steering Committee (PSC) was offered training on leadership skills, communication, conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS awareness and conducting meeting. The PSC membership consisted of local representatives from women groups, councilors and members of the community. In terms of technical skills the Dept of Labour provided accredited training on painting, concrete reinforcement and electricity.

Challenges that were experienced during implementation were as follows:

- Inaccessibility of the projects which led to delays in delivery of material and costs were incurred since the suppliers were reluctant to deliver material at the project site. One of the trucks was also involved in an accident whilst delivering material, fortunately nobody was injured. Unavailability of water was another challenge during construction and the contractors also used donkey carts to fetch water. Nhlanhla Phiri Construction – Grade 3GB was responsible for the construction of this project.

The introduction of providing facilities under one roof in a coordinated manner will assist to address the social ills facing Umfithi community.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation to everyone present here today to grace this occasion. You are witness to the fact that KwaZulu-Natal Government is genuinely concerned about the welfare of the disadvantaged people of this country.

Those who do not have your interests at heart must not be allowed to destroy these facilities, because they are not just meant to benefit you, but they will be of benefit to your children, brothers & sisters, Mothers and fathers. These services belong to the people and service delivery is informed by the principle of Batho Pele, “people first”!

Ladies and Gentlemen, please allow me to hand over the keys of this MPCC to the MEC for Local Government, Housing & Traditional Affairs Mr. Michael Mabuyakhulu as a sign that it is no longer belong to the Department of Works but from this moment it belongs to Local Government department.

**BUILDING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CONSTRUCTION –
SITHUTHUKISA IMIPHAKATHI NGOKWAKHA**

I thank you.