

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE MEC AT THE OFFICIAL  
LAUNCH OF IZANDLA ZIYAGEZANA AT  
HARMMERSDALE ON 26 JULY 2008.**

HOD

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

COUNCILLORS

OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT

MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, I GREET YOU ALL

Let me start by expressing my gratitude to see this event becoming a success. Your presence here speaks volumes with regards to your willingness to work with the government in bringing development to our communities. This confirms that our campaign to encourage community participation and involvement is becoming a reality. For development initiatives to make an impact in the lives of our communities both rural and urban municipalities, it must be communities themselves who play a leading role in their development. The principle of “The people shall govern” finds expression only when the people are involved in their development.

The Department of Public Works has initiated various programmes which are aimed at contributing to economic development while pushing back the frontiers of poverty. Our department recognizes that the gap between first and second economy needs to be reduced. This is aimed at addressing inequalities created by the old order. Our programmes also respond to empowerment of the youth, women and people living with disabilities. We have successfully implemented the Extended Public Works Programme which has created many job opportunities mainly for people living below poverty line. Through this programme many people have obtained skills which have enabled them to start their own sustainable businesses.

The youth from the previously disadvantaged communities has also benefited from the NYS programme through skills transfer. Under this programme the youth receives theoretical training for 6 months while receiving a stipend of R 600 and proceed to practicals for another 6 months and receive a stipend of R1000. The training focuses more on brick laying and plastering. The youth exit this programmes with entrepreneurial skills which enable them to start their own construction businesses.

The Department also has bursary and internship programmes for youth who specializes in Quantity Surveying, Real Estate, Engineering, Project management and Architecture. The youth from previously disadvantaged communities are the main beneficiaries of these programmes.

However today we are here to launch a new initiative called **“Izandla Ziyagezana”**. This initiative recognizes that South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal face two main challenges –poverty eradication and inequality. One of the core businesses of our Department is management of government properties which includes vacant land. Given the fact that some of this land is within our communities we felt that it is crucial to ensure that it does not pollute our areas as most of it has grown weeds.

We then resolved that we better hit two birds with one stone. This was to be achieved by ensuring that the vacant land is cleared and that local people are involved. Therefore this programme will create jobs for local people. **“Sixosha Indlala”**. The idea behind this initiative is basically to create jobs because if it was not so we could have hired a contractor who would use a tractor and hire only the driver. The government is trying by all means to use labour absorbing methods in its projects with the purpose of creating as many jobs as possible for the people.

Therefore as this programme is launched today I hope that it will grow and be sustainable. This is just the beginning. Your cooperation is therefore very critical in this regard.

I therefore wish to appeal to you to work with us and protect government properties within your communities. It is our responsibility to ensure that our buildings are not turned into white elephants.

With those words let me thank all of you for your contributions especially the councilor, officials from the municipality and Public Works and committees from this community. I am aware that a lot of effort was needed for this programme to be successful starting from planning. I must once more thank the community for attending this event, I want to encourage you to be more involved in the development of the community.

I thank you.