



# Local News



Official Newsletter for the Department of Local Government

Apr-Jun 2008 - Issue N° 1

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- Bushbuckridge Communities Endure Dangerous Storm
- Thusong Service Centers On The Cards.
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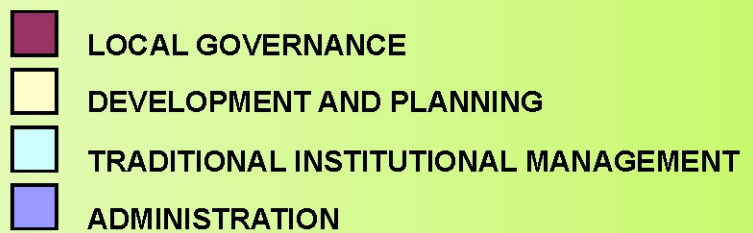
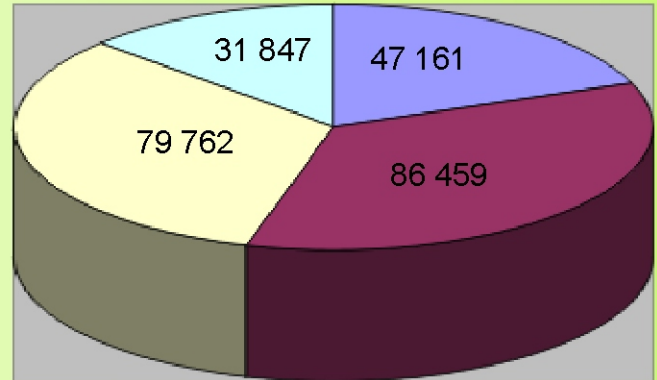
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## DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ALLOCATED BUDGET AMOUNT

2008/2009 R'000



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# EDITORIAL

The beginning of the 2008/09 financial year has seen the splitting of the department of Local Government and Housing into two votes being confirmed. This split follows the decision taken by the Executive Council to separate the department into two votes. This was also confirmed by President Thabo Mbeki when he proclaimed the split at the end of March 2008. The process of splitting the two departments had a huge bearing on programme 1 which had to be shared amongst the two departments. We are indeed glad that progress of staff placement within the two departments has been completed without any major challenges. To beef up their capacity, both departments have begun the processes of filling up critical posts.

The splitting of the department into two votes has also necessitated that the Communications Directorate comes up with internal and external publications for each department. You will realize as you read through this publication that pens will be in local government issues. For the time being the local government publications will use the name **Umkhaya**, both internal

and external where as Housing publications will use **Tasekhaya**. We will begin a process of consulting staff members to identify a suitable name for the publication. We call upon all stakeholders to submit proposed names for the local government publications to the editor, Mr George Mthethwa at: [gpmthethwa@mpg.gov.za](mailto:gpmthethwa@mpg.gov.za). We request that submissions be made by the end of July 2008.

At the end of April to the beginning of May 2008, the department held elections to reconstitute Traditional Authorities into Traditional Councils. These elections, which were the first of their kind in the whole country, were very successful. They taught us a lot of valuable lessons which will assist us in the next round of these elections to be held in five years time. The elections also gave us a rare opportunity to see how much our people value their Traditional Authorities.

We appreciate the support given to this whole process by our esteemed Amakhosi and the dedication of members of staff of the department.

The MEC for the Department of Local Government and the Department of Housing, tabled the Policy and Budget Speeches for the two departments on 5 June 2008. By so doing she has given us the line of March for the 2008/09 financial year. The programmes and plans have been outlined. Key amongst these will be accelerating service delivery, ensuring fully functional Thusong Service Centers, Social Economic Development and the construction of the Provincial Disaster Management Center.

We are confident that the 2008/09 financial year will be a good one for the department. With our pens and cameras ready, we will capture every activity of the department. We are pleased to offer you this edition of Umkhaya. We look forward to your proposals on how we can improve our publications. Hope you will find it interesting to read.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Send them to: [gpmthethwa@mpg.gov.za](mailto:gpmthethwa@mpg.gov.za)



**SUPPORT: MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini is mobbed by well wishers after tabling the budget speech in the legislature**

# MEC'S FOREWORD

I would like to join my colleagues in different spheres of government and partner institutions by condemning the recent xenophobic attacks in the country. These attacks directed to our fellow brothers and sisters from other African countries are the worst treatment that can be given to anyone. There is no justification to back these acts, and as a result I would like to express words of gratitude to the police for apprehending the perpetrators and I am convinced that the law will take its course. As government we cannot allow criminal elements to take advantage of our fellow Africans displaced by war and other inhuman treatment in their countries. These acts demonstrate a lack of understanding and appreciation by unruly elements in our communities about the role of African States who provided us with sanctuary when we fled this country from the oppression regime. They further provided us the base and resources to fight that regime for South Africa to be what it is today. As a country we must demonstrate the spirit of Ubuntu and support them. We must reach a stage where we declare that 'South Africa cannot be an island of prosperity, surrounded by a sea of poverty'. In Mpumalanga, the Honourable Premier, Mr Thabang Makwetla has set up an inter-departmental task team, of which I am a member, to take lead in mobilizing communities against the xenophobic scourge attacks. So I urge you all to assist us in fighting xenophobia in our province and in the country.

The process to split the department into two has been completed, with the Policy and Budget speech which I delivered recently in the legislature, marked the functionality of the Department of Local Government independent from the Department of Housing. This wouldn't have happened without the commitment demonstrated by the task team. The biggest challenge we faced, as the process unfolded, was to make sure that service delivery is not hampered as the current staff had to be split too. We had to make sure that the Local Government leg, dealt accordingly with issues related to IDPs, LEDs at Municipalities, Traditional Leadership, Community Development Workers, etc. Through the commitment of both Mr Cyril Dlamini and Mr Sam Ngubane, in their capacity as Acting HODs, the process is impressively moving to the right direction, with the appointment of HODs on the cards. The positions have already been advertised.

Our intervention to return Mbombela Municipality to its former glory through a recovery plan, is bearing fruits. Since the appointment of the administrators in March, headed by Mr Khayelihle Mpungose, the report has been remarkable. Cabinet has noted with appreciation progress with regard to the review of the organizational structure, skills audit, evaluation and revision of all policies, skills audit, financial capacity finalization of asset registers, and skills development for infrastructure plans. I am confident that by August, we will all be celebrating the success of the intervention when a final, conclusive report is tabled, at the lapse of the 6 months given to the administrators. I hope that the newly elected Mayor, Cllr Lassy Chiwayo will inherit a municipality with proper systems in place in order to deliver on his mandate. On the same breath, I am delighted by progress made in the Thaba Chweu Municipality, and as a result we have removed the municipality under curatorship in terms of Section 139 (1) (b) of the Constitution.

As I express my delight to the outcome of the intervention plans in the two municipalities, I am concerned though about the poor performance in some of our municipalities. One of our many challenges as a department is to scale up the number of households with clean water and electricity. We have already committed ourselves to reduce the backlog of water provision by 86 000 in the 2008/09 and 126 325 by 2009/10 financial year. Allegations of maladministration, fraud, corruption and poor service delivery levelled against some of them have prompted us to institute investigations in accordance with Section 106 of the Municipal Systems Act. We cannot allow such allegations to impede service delivery. Municipalities play a central role in this. I trust that municipalities will heed the call to improve their performance.

The process to reconstitute our Traditional Councils gained momentum when elections were conducted in line with the Mpumalanga Traditional Leadership and Governance Act of 2005, I would like to thank Amakhosi/MaKgoshi for taking heed of our call to work hand in glove with us by appointing people who will serve in the Traditional Council and mobilize communities to participate in the elections. We will soon proclaim a date for the elections in areas where the elections did not take place. I hope that Amakhosi as well as their communities in those areas will emulate their counterparts.



**MEC K.C Mashego-Dlamini**

Our next move as a department is to implement training programmes for the new councils and for Amakhosi to participate in municipal councils in line with the Municipal Structure's Act.

As a department, we remain committed to our cause of ensuring that services are brought closer to the people. The appointment of Center Managers and IT Specialists for the Thusong Service Centers (TSCs) in support of this cause. The days in which our people travel long distances to apply for ID Documents, government grants and other amenities, will soon be over. We want these services to be right at their door step. The plan to scale up the number of the TSCs from 14 is well on track, so that by 2014, each municipality in our province should have 2 TSCs.

I am proud to say that all our plans are falling into shape with regard to Community Participation Programme and Disaster Management. We have recruited 420 Community Development Workers (CDW). The cash injection of R51 million which I announced in my budget speech will add impetus for this programme. With regard to the Disaster Management Centre, we have set a target of 2009 for its completion, just in time for the 2010 Soccer World Cup. I urge all our staff members, external stakeholders including local communities to support us in our Endeavour to make Mpumalanga a truly Pioneering Spirit!

# MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING HOD

Subsequent to the Policy and Budget Speech in the legislature, the department went into a Strategic Planning Session in Blydespoort Canyon, to refine our plans to be compatible with the policy and budget as pronounced by the MEC. This was the first Strategic Planning Session after the split of the department of Local Government and Housing into two. Following the split, the department had to coin a new vision and mission to serve as a driving force.

One of the urgent challenges facing the department is to fill vacancies caused by the split. Over the next few months our Human Resource section will be hard at work to ensure that we advertise these vacancies, and in the process ensure that we employ people with the right skills in the right positions. As an implementing wing of the department, it is critical that the vacancies are filled. Due to the process of filling vacancies, some of them left vacant as a result of the split, a number of officials are acting in the positions. I can assure all and sundry that due diligence will be applied to ensure that due processes in filling up the positions are followed in a transparent manner.

Following the split of the two departments into two, the department of Local Government is now an entity of its own with a separate budget vote. The tabling of the Policy and Budget Speech by the Honourable MEC, Candith Mashego-Dlamini in the legislature recently, marked the beginning of a new journey for the department. The speech served as a compass for us to know which direction to take to deliver on our mandate, supported by financial support for all the different administration components.

MEC Mashego-Dlamini has expressed concern about the performance of some of the municipalities. Our Municipal

support section, is hard at work to assist municipalities to overcome their challenges. As a department, we believe that the proper functionality of municipalities will help the service delivery machinery to do appropriate work. That is why investigations instituted against municipalities who have been accused of maladministration, fraud, etc, will be expedited to restore the proper functionality of the machinery. The municipal support directorate will ensure that the IDPs and LEDs are in line with legislation prescripts. We need to maintain the status quo with regard to the improvement we have seen in the financial accountability side, where in the majority of municipalities have submitted financial statements on time and received unqualified reports from the Auditor General.

The SALGA Excellence Awards for best performing municipalities in a number of areas does not only serve as a barometer to gauge which ones need assistance, but also serves as an entry point for intervention. For example we now know that Dipaleseng Municipality is able to spend its MIG allocation on time, Emakhazeni has the best disaster management system, while Thaba Chweu is well on track on the municipal organizational transformation. At district level, we now know that Gert Sibande District has the best Disaster Management System in place, while Ehlanzeni District and Nkangala District have the best LED and Municipal Organization Transformation in place respectively. And as such, we encourage SALGA to continue with the awards annually for the purpose of service delivery.

The Department will not rest until the plan to establish a Disaster Management Centre is completed. As MEC Mashego-Dlamini indicated in her policy and budget speech, the center will be completed by 2009. The importance of such a center cannot be over-emphasised, given



**Acting HOD Mr. S. Ngubane**

the nature of our province, which is prone to major disasters. Over the past two years, we have been under siege from veld fires which caused major damage to farms in the Thaba Chweu, Albert Luthuli and Mkhondo Municipalities. Earlier this year, a major storm hit the Bushbuckridge area. The 2010 Soccer World is on the door step. We are bordering Mozambique, which is prone to floods. So we must be ready to deal with any type of the disasters, hence the need to establish the center and to resource it. Efforts are underway to make sure that we comply with the Disaster Management Act. The recent Disaster Management workshop held in Greenway Woods in which experts and stakeholders converged under one roof to chart the way forward, forms part of this. Last year we invited weather experts from the Weather Service to share their experiences with us.

The mandate bestowed on us is huge and we urge all our stakeholders to support us in carrying it out. I hope that we will report good news at the end of the 2008/09 financial year.

# DEPARTMENT PUMPS IN MONEY FOR ACCELERATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY

**M**EC for Local Government and Housing, Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini has tabled a budget of more than R245 million for the Department of Local Government. Part of the budget, according to Mashego-Dlamini, will go into administration, R47 161 while R86 459 has been allocated to Local Governance. She added that R79 762 has been allocated to Development and Planning while R31 847 will be used for Traditional Institutional Management. In attendance to the budget speech were Members of the Legislature, Amakhosi, Executive Mayors, Councillors and officials from South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and government parastatals such as National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) and the National Housing Corporation.

The presentation of the budget also marked the separation of two separate votes for the two departments in line with the split since 1 April 2008. Despite the number of challenges facing the department such as provision of water to outstanding households and electricity supply, MEC Mashego-Dlamini told members of the legislature that the achievements are remarkable. "Through our intervention, the number of municipalities with unqualified reports increased from 43% to 52% in

Mpumalanga. 8 of our municipalities have performed well by spending 100% of their MIG allocation during the 2007/08 financial year. We have ensured that 10 of the 14 Thusong Service Centres are in operation", she said.

The Policy and Budget speech was delivered at the backdrop of the recent Traditional Council elections conducted by the department of Local Government as part of a process to reconstitute Traditional Leadership in accordance with the Mpumalanga Traditional Authorities and Governance Act. To take the process forward the department will spend R2,7 million from the budget to train the elected councilors as part of Capacity building. In addition, the department will also set aside R2,8 million to coordinate workshops for participation of traditional leaders in municipalities in terms of Section 81 of the Municipal Structures Act.

The department has ensured the full functionality of ten of the fourteen Thusong Service centers. The centers are used to bring services closer to people, such as Identity Documents and Social Grants. Government plans to have all Thusong Service centers running in all municipalities by the year 2014, and the department has already appointed Center Managers to manage them as part of the plan.

MEC Mashego-Dlamini said R1 million has been budgeted for branding the centers, while R8,4 million has been set aside for the construction of Thusong Centers at Swalala and Matsamo. Other programmes to be financed through the budget are as follows:

- R51 million for Community Development Workers (CDW)
- R935, 482 million for Local Economic Development (LED)
- R500 000 for the translation of Integrated Development Planning (IDP) into various languages,
- R2,5 million for upgrading fire fighting equipments

Although progress has been made with regard to the connection of households to free basic water, through the Water for All project, however, MEC Mashego-Dlamini expressed concern that the process is moving at a snail pace. So far a total of 667 495 out of 926 050 households have access to water in Mpumalanga. The backlog is standing at 258 555. Despite this, Mashego-Dlamini says the backlog will be reduced by 86 000 by 2008/09 and 126 325 by 2009/10.



**BUDGET OF HOPE:** MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini is ushered out of the legislature to the Govan Mbeki Foyer, after presenting the budget speech.



**NOT READY TO CELEBRATE?:** Officials share lighter moments during a gala dinner at the Civic center after the budget speech.

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS ONE STEP CLOSER TO BRING SERVICES TO YOUR DOOR STEP



**Forest Feni,  
Manager:  
Tholulwazi.**



**Jane Nkhalane,  
Manager:  
Wonderfontein**



**Bheki Manzini, IT  
Specialist:  
Thuthukani**



**Absalom Malope,  
Manager:  
Casteel.**



**Thulani Khoza, IT  
Specialist-  
Matsamo**



**Bongani Ngwenyama,  
IT Specialist.-  
Wonderfontein**



**Sergeant Nkosi,  
Manager:  
Matsamo**



**Siph Mahlangu,  
Manager: Marapyane  
Nothando Shabangu, IT  
Specialist.**



**Andile Mbuyane, IT  
Specialist.-  
Mbangwane**



**Jeff Madonsela,  
Manager:  
Daggakraal.**



**Mike Mabuza,  
Manager:  
Mbangwane.**



**Phakamile Nxumalo:  
IT Specialist:  
Moremele.**



**Lawrence Moronga,  
Manager:  
Driefontein.**

The long trips undertaken by people to travel to service points to apply for social grants and ID documents are about to end if efforts by the Department of Local Government are anything to go by. In line with a plan by the National Government to establish Thusong Service Centers in every municipality by the year 2014, the provincial government has set a target of ensuring that by 2014 every municipality has two Thusong Service Centers. The department is one step towards the fulfillment of the plan. This after the appointment of 10 Center Managers and IT Specialists to oversee the functionality of TSCs in the following areas: Mpuluzi, Thuthukani, Casteel, Mbangwane, Breyten, Wonderfontein, Daggakraal, Doornkop, Moremele, Louisville, Matsamo and Marapyane. MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini says the Thusong Service Centers will be used to bring services closer to the people. "As government, we are continuing with our efforts to ensure that people do not have to traverse long distances to access the basic government services such as birth certificates, identity documents and government grants.

It is our responsibility that all citizens irregardless of race or gender access government services", Mashego-Dlamini said.

More Thusong Service centers are on the pipeline, following the announcement by MEC Mashego-Dlamini that the department has set aside money to the tune of R8,4 million for the construction of Thusong Service centers of Matsamo and Swalala.

In her 2008/09 Policy and Budget speech in the legislature, MEC Mashego-Dlamini said: "The Provincial Executive Council has approved a Thusong Service branding with the inclusion of a provincial logo. The department has budgeted R1 million to brand all the Thusong Service centers in the 2008/09 financial year".

The department is yet to establish Thusong Centres in the following municipalities: Delmas, Emalahleni, Umjindi, Steve Tshwete and Thembisile. The department, according to Mashego-Dlamini, is currently negotiating with these municipalities to identify old proper buildings to be utilized as Thusong Service Centres.



**Mduduzi Phiri,  
Manager:  
Lindiwe Khumalo, IT**



**Given Muavha, IT  
Specialist.-  
Casteel.**



**Faith Ndlovu (IT  
Specialist) and Sibongile  
Maphalala (Manager,  
Louisville)**

# Department in Action



**SYMPATHY:** Manager in the office of the MEC, Mr Mafikizolo Simelane inspects a donated tent in the aftermath of the Bushbuckridge storm.



**FOOD FOR VICTIMS:** MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini donated Food parcels to the storm victims.



**READY TO IMPROVE:** Delegates from local municipalities Attended a MIG workshop at Loskop Dam.



**VOTING MOMENT:** Election officers prepare ballot papers during the elections for traditional council elections in Siyabuswa.



**MEDIA INTEREST:** SABC TV reporter, Neil Shikwambane and Cameraman, Klaas Skhosana captured the budget speech in the legislature.



**LIGHTER MOMENT:** MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini is mobbed by well wishers post budget speech.



# Department in Action



**INTERNATIONALLY-ACCLAIMED:** Popular MC, Mr JZM Sambo left the audience in stitches during the gala dinner at the Civic Center.



**MIG STATUS QUO:** Albert Luthuli Municipality's Mr Isaac Marokane explains how MIG allocations have been spent to the DPLG's Mr Derrick Gabone.



**SKILLS EVALUATION:** Delegates from municipalities attended the department's skills colloquium at the Civic center.



**PUTTING LIDS AGAINST DISASTERS:** Acting Head of the Disaster Management Center, Mr Jacques Benade addresses delegates during a Disaster Management Workshop at Greenway Woods.



**WELCOME NOTE:** Newly elected Mbombela Mayor, Mr Lassy Chiwayo welcomes delegates at the Civic Center during the gala dinner.



**FINANCIAL CONTROL:** ACTING CFO, Mr Goldrich Gardee tabled a document of the revised procurement policy during a strategic plan in Blydespoort Canyon.

# KNOW YOUR MUNICIPALITY

## DR J.S MOROKA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



### Dr JS MOROKA MUNICIPALITY

#### GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Dr. J S Moroka Local Municipality is located in the North-Western corner of Mpumalanga Province where it borders Gauteng Province to the South-West and Limpopo Province to the north. It forms part of a larger economic sub-region whereby it is greatly influenced by economic activities within neighbouring areas, and to a lesser degree influences these areas. The functional sub region consist firstly of the Tshwane Metropolitan Area, which is situated approximately 80 km to the South West. The Tshwane and Johannesburg Metropolitan areas are the most important employment centres and large numbers of people commute daily to these areas. The Community of Dr J.S. Moroka Municipality and Thembeile Municipality compete in Gauteng Province for employment opportunities.

#### ECONOMIC PROFILE

The local economy of Dr J.S. Moroka is characterized by dominance of government services sector. However, the government services sector experienced a decline in the levels of output. The agricultural sector and community services sectors also experience a reduction. However, the trade, transport and mining sectors experience modest growth. The local economy is characterized by limited economic activity and relatively large economic concentrations. Between 1996 and 2001 the economy of the municipalities grew at a rate of 1.5%. The contribution of the local economy to the economy of the District was 4.1%. The slow rate of economy growth can be attributed to, inter alia, the geographical features of deep rural location of the municipality.

The Dr J.S. Moroka locality is characterized by limited economic activity and relatively large population concentrations. Unemployment in the area is also comparatively high. The primary

areas within which the local population is employed are:

- Government services, Trade and Community services sectors, approximately 37% of the labour force is employed by the public sector.
- The government service sector includes:
  - \* Medical and clinical services, Police and related services, Traffic service, Municipal services, Provincial government activities, Etc.
  - \* A critical issue is that, this sector has shed almost 680 employment opportunities. This translate into a negative growth rate of .5% for the 1998-2004 periods. All the other sectors recorded negative growth rate for the same period except: Trade and Finance.
  - \* It is clearly evident that this local is in desperate need of employment creation and poverty alleviation activities.

Although unemployment rate are high and income levels are generally low, the standard of living is relatively high when compared to informal township in Gauteng Province. The permanent of employment in the formal sector of Dr J.S Moroka, is evident that the majorities of employees are only appointed in their positions on a part-time/ contract basis. This situation contributes to work insecurity which hampers financial planning and investment in the area.

A problem identified by formal businesses was the presence of informal hawkers and sidewalk traders. These informal traders are blamed for "stealing" business and making the business environment unattractive for potential clients. In a community like Dr J.S Moroka, with limited consumer buying power it is inevitable that there will be some degree of friction between formal and informal business owners. Possible intervention from the Municipal Council may include a formalization strategy (e.g. providing trading stalls in a designated area) aimed at informal trading. Business respondents furthermore indicated the need for an intensive marketing drive by Council.

Only 31.1% of businesses in the formal sector indicated an annual turnover of more than R100 000 and only 1.7% claimed to realize more than R1 million. This situation is of concern because businesses are struggling to make a reasonable profit. This situation has negative implications for employment, businesses expansion, business survival and production.

The higher concentration of formal businesses is found in Siyabuswa, while informal trading is found throughout. In total, formal trading comprises 73.5% of all business and informal trading 26.3%. Marapyane hosts a hub of informal traders but is very limited in product range and specialization offered.



**Executive Mayor, Cllr  
Innah Masombuka**

#### TOURISM

Dr J.S Moroka has a vibrant cultural environment. As this is part of the Cultural Heartland, tourism is the single greatest economic value of biodiversity as most tourists visit the province solely for its scenic beauty and wildlife. Therefore Dr J.S Moroka attracts the tourists because of cultural activities. Personalities such as Esther Mahlangu, organization such Ndebele Foundation and many more play an important part in tourism attraction.

The following are the best-known tourist attractions in Dr JS Moroka:

- Mdala Nature Reserve
- Mkholwane Lodge
- Arts, Craft and Tourism information Centre
- African curio manufacturing at Ramantsho
- Ndudza Mabhoko Royal Kraal
- Manala Mbhongo
- Tourism route KAMOKA Open Africa Route exists as a tourism route in Dr JS Moroka.

#### VISION

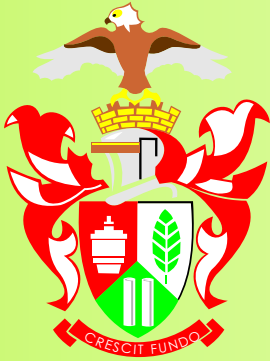
"An effective, efficient public, institution delivering quality, sustainable services to better, the lives of people"

#### MISSION

Bettering the lives communities through: Sustainable service delivery. Provision of sustainable job, Creation opportunities; Public participation.

# MKHONDO MUNICIPALITY

## MKHONDO



## MUNICIPALITY

### GEOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

Mkhondo Municipality is situated on the N2, about half way between Gauteng and Richards Bay on the North Coast of KwaZulu-Natal. It covers 4 868 square kilometers with a population of about 142 885. Mkhondo is composed of two towns, Piet Retief and Amsterdam and other bigger villages, Driefontein and Iswepe. Many tourists, international and domestic traveling, between Kruger National Park and the coast find Mkhondo Municipality a most convenient and popular stop over. The borders from Mkhondo to Swaziland are only 30 km and 17 km, Piet Retief and Amsterdam respectively.

### ECONOMY

Mkhondo Municipality is one of the largest forest areas in the country. It accounts for about 36 % of the gross geographic product. This is followed by other agricultural activities such as piggeries, poultry, dairy, beef farming and crops (maize and sunflower). Investment opportunities range from wood to farming, eco-tourism, industries and Mining, Pine, Wattle and eucalyptus are but three types of wood that can attract investors who intend to establish woodworking industries and improve production of timber for furniture and building materials such as door and window frames. The Spatial Development Framework of Mkhondo presents new pockets of land that may be

utilized for industrial development.

There are industries like PG Bison, Mondi and Charka Charcoal that also have a significant contribution into local, national and international economy. A large amount of coal is mined locally and exported internationally via Richards Bay harbour in KwaZulu-Natal.

### TOURISM

Mkhondo Municipality is surrounded by big dams, namely: Heyshope Dam, Westoe Dam, Jericho Dam and Morgenstond Dam. These are areas that boost eco-tourism, e.g trout fishing and water sports. The beautiful scenic areas around Amsterdam, Iswepe and Driefontein present more tourists attractive for bird watching, hiking and game reserves. The initiative to develop tourism potential in the past five years was supported and it gains momentum.

The Ntombe Heritage flagship project which has been commissioned by the Honourable Premier of the Province for the development and preservation of Battlefields at Ntombe will attract more tourists to Mkhondo Municipality. The current proposal will trigger creation of employment and investment to the area.

### MAYOR'S PROFILE

The Executive Mayor, Ms Mary Khumalo completed Matric at Siyamukela High School. She further studied at the University Graduate School of Public and Development Management and obtained a Diploma in Project Management and Rental Housing in 2004. She subsequently enrolled for a Certificate in Financial Management at the Zela Tech. She also obtained a Certificate of Competency in Governance and South African Local Governance Law from the University of Zululand.

She has served as a shop steward of the Communication Workers' Union between 1995 and 2001. She was elected Provincial Gender



**Executive Mayor Cllr,  
Mary Khumalo**

Coordinator and Regional Chairperson of the union. She joined COSATU while serving as a member of SANCO in Piet Retief. She also served as Chairperson of the ANC Women's League in Piet Retief. She also served as a member of the ANC's Regional Executive Committee and Regional Working Committee. She was elected Deputy Mayor of the then Piet Retief TLC between 1995 and 2000 before being elected Executive Mayor of Mkhondo Municipality. She was recently elected to serve as a member of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

### VISION

A community-driven, tranquil and model municipality of excellence.

### MISSION

Mkhondo Municipality is committed to:

- Enhance development through effective and sufficient administration.
- Provide friendly and quality service to all communities
- Promote prosperity through economic growth and tourism.

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION RE-ENERGISED

**C**hallenges faced by Communication at all Municipalities came under the spotlight during a recent Communication Workshop for Local Government at Loskop Dam. The workshop was organised jointly by the core team, which consists of the Premier's office, the Department of Local Government, SALGA and the GCIS to scrutinise the functionality of Local Government Communication units. Communicators were also equipped on strategies to develop strong media relations to project a positive image of their institutions.

A number of challenges faced by municipalities emerged which included the following:

- Lack of sufficient funding for Communicators,
- Improper placement of Communicators,
- Lack of Communication Policies and Strategies.

In dealing with the challenges, it was resolved that:

- The core team will assist Municipalities to put in place

Communication policies and strategies,

- Proper placement of Communicators and funding of the units will be deferred to Municipal Managers to deal with.

The core team has sent questionnaires for a response which requires information about the number of Communication Officers employed, budget allocation and Communication policies and strategies. The responses will be presented to the Premier's Communicating Forum.

During the workshop, the SABC's Regional Editor, Mr Isaac Masemola and Global Interface's Ms Ocean Ngobeni equipped Communicators with ways and means of developing strong relations with the media. "It does not help us to receive media invitations which have a lot of questions than answers. This makes it difficult for us to cover some of the events at a short notice because Mpumalanga is widely stretched," Mr Masemola said. He urged communicators to

inform the media in advance about their activities for planning purposes. Ms Ngobeni also gave tips on how to mitigate negative reporting against municipalities.

"It's within your right to tell a journalist that you don't understand the question, right in the middle of an interview. This will ensure that you give right answers and prevent distortion. A distortion can compromise your municipality," she warned.

Director of Media Liaison in the Premier's office, Ms Nonala Ndlovu shared information about the branding plan of the province. "The province boost beautiful scenery for tourism and historical features. The slogan, Mpumalanga, A Pioneering Spirit, has been coined to reflect this. It will be used to project the image of the province," she said.

A concern was raised though that the slogan does not reflect the tourism features of Mpumalanga as a whole. Ms Ndlovu said consultations to accommodate the views of stakeholders are still underway before the plan can be finalized.



**TAKING LESSONS:** Local Government's Simphiwe Kunene and Mkhondo's Musa Shongwe were some of the Communicators who attended the workshop at Loskop Dam.



**LEARNING CURVE:** Mr Sibusiso Radebe of Albert Luthuli Municipality and Ms Mendi Mngomezulu of Pixley ka Seme Municipality grasp lessons during the workshop.

# MUNICIPALITIES JERKED UP TO UTILIZE MIG FUNDS.

It's business unusual and all hands on deck, as the Department of Local Government assist municipalities to spend Municipal Infrastructure Grants (MIG). The MIG funds are disbursed by the National Department of Local Government as part of service delivery to improve the infrastructure backlog such as water and sanitation and roads neglected by the erstwhile apartheid regime. The funds are approved by Treasury and transferred to the National Department of Local Government which in turn transfer them to municipalities in all the provinces based on their level of infrastructure development needs. The Provincial Department of Local Government plays a monitoring role.

In a bid to play this role, the department organized a MIG workshop that took place at Loskop Dam to assess the level of expenditure and patterns on allocated funds. The workshop was attended by Project Managers from Local and District municipalities and SALGA officials who also shared best practices to prevent roll over of the funds to following financial year. During the workshop the following challenges were identified as contributing factors for the roll over:

- Lack of capacity in municipalities,
- The focus for MIG allocations is on roads,
- Municipalities are unable to work According to MIG time lines.

In Mpumalanga more than R300 million has been allocated to municipalities under the MIG allocation during the 2007/08 financial year, and R589 million has been allocated during the 2008/09 financial year. By April R142 million had not yet spent from the 2007/08 financial year. It was resolved during the workshop that municipalities should be trained on how to spend the allocated funds in line with MIG guidelines and supply chain management policy. The Department of Local Government

and Provincial Affairs has offered to assist. The Department's Mr Fanie Bologo said municipalities are expected to spend 75% of MIG on water and sanitation, while 25% should be used on roads infrastructure and 5% on other projects such as recreational facilities.

According to Mr Bologo, failure by municipalities to spend the allocation will have rippling effects. "The MIG funds are meant to address the infrastructure backlog caused by apartheid. Therefore any failure by municipalities to use it will spark community uprising because people are tired of living without proper infrastructure," said Mr Bologo. He added that this inability breeds poor service delivery.

Although municipalities were berated for failing to spend the MIG allocations, however, acting HOD for Local Government, Mr Sam Ngubane said the situation has improved. "Previously, the MIG expenditure would be below 50% by this time. However, the situation has been turned around as the expenditure is now above 80%," Ngubane said. He added that until all municipalities spend all the allocations without a roll over, the department will work tirelessly to ensure that it happens.

During the workshop, the Department of Public Works urged municipalities to register their MIG projects in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) data base. According to the EPWP Senior Manager in Mpumalanga, Mr Francis Motha, MIG projects have to be registered so that they can also be reflected on the list of projects that create job opportunities. "During the last financial year, our job creation target was 25 000, and we only managed to deliver 19 000. Our target now is 50 000, which is possible only if MIG projects are registered with us," said Mr Motha.



**READY TO INTERVENE:** Acting HOD, Mr Sam Ngubane along with organizers of the MIG workshop at Loskop Dam.



**REHABILITATION:** An MIG road construction project in Barberton



**MIG INFRASTRUCTURE:** Construction of the Water Treatment Plant at Langeloop in the Nkomazi Municipality

# SALGA EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The annual SALGA Excellent Awards took place at Emnotweni Arena in Nelspruit. During the glittering function attended by the MEC for Local Government, Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini, Executive Mayors, Municipal Managers and Councilors. Municipalities were presented with awards for their performance in different categories. The awarding system seeks

to encourage municipalities to improve their improvement in line with the five year Local Government Strategic Agenda.

The following municipalities walked away with awards in various categories:

## EMAKHAZENI MUNICIPALITY

- Best Local Municipality on Municipal Transformation in Organizational Development
- Best municipality on Youth Development



**EMAKHAZENI**  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

## GERT SIBANDE DISTRICT

- Best District on Communication Management
- Best District on Disaster Management



## UMJINDI MUNICIPALITY

- Best Local Municipality on Communication Management



## THABA CHWEU MUNICIPALITY

- Best Municipality on on Public Safety
- Best Municipality on Disaster



# SALGA EXCELLENCE AWARDS CONT . . .

## DIPALESENG MUNICIPALITY

- Best Local Municipality on MIG
- Best Municipality with peaceful Labour



## DR J.S MOROKA MUNICIPALITY

- Best Municipality on Public Participation



Dr JS MOROKA MUNICIPALITY

## MSUKALIGWA MUNICIPALITY

- Best Municipality on Compliance with Municipal Property Rates Act in the country.
- Best Local Municipality on Workplace Skills Plan



## EHLANZENI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

- Best District Municipality on LED
- Best District on Safety and Security
- Best District on Gender Mainstreaming.



## NKANGALA DISTRICT

- Best District on Municipal Transformation in Organisational Development
- Best District on Youth Development



# DISASTER PRONE MPUMALANGA PUT MEASURES TO DEAL WITH DISASTERS.

Veld fires and Storms remain the biggest disaster threats to Mpumalanga. Recently, a major storm left a trail of disaster in the Bushbuckridge Municipality when several houses were destroyed, leaving families homeless in Bushbuckridge, Dumphries A, B and C. During the incident, 2 people died while several live stocks were killed. A similar storm damaged houses at Sphelanyane, where in several houses were destroyed. The destruction by the storm came after last year's veld fires which destroyed large tracts of farms in the Thaba Chweu and Mkhondo Municipalities.

In a bid to beef up efforts to deal with similar disasters in future, the Department of Local Government has established a Provincial Disaster Management Advisory Forum, which consist of 44 members representing 37 stakeholders. The forum is expected to develop a strategy for coordination of activities related to risk management and gather information about capacity and access to resources. The construction of a Disaster Management Center which will be completed by the end of 2009 and be ready for the 2010 Soccer World Cup forms part of the strategy. During a recent Disaster Management Workshop at Greenway Woods in White River, a grim picture on the high level of disaster risks was painted.

Research indicates that no more than 62 major disasters have occurred in Mpumalanga between 1800 and 1995. These include veld fires and floods. Acting HOD, Mr Sam Ngubane says this necessitate the need to be ready. "We are expected to craft a framework to guide the response in case of disasters. We are already in the fire season, and so anything is possible," Mr Ngubane said.

Director of Disaster Policy and Compliance Management in the National Department of Local Government and Provincial Affairs, Mr George Killian shared experiences on how to deal with disasters in line with the Disaster Management Act of 2002.

Chairperson of the Disaster Management Committee from the South African Veterinary Association, Dr Melvyn Greenberg told the gathering that some of the disasters can be prevented. Dr Greenberg warned delegates that some of the disasters are caused by the bad treatment of nature. "Sometimes we cut trees that can protect us against major storms. Sometimes we kill animals because of their delicious meat, not knowing that the very same meat is infected with incurable diseases," Dr Greenberg warned. The Department has set aside an amount of R2,5 million to give fire fighting equipments a facelift in various municipalities.



**STRATEGIES FOR DISASTERS: Disaster expert, Mr Thinus de Beer outlines disaster prevention methods during the workshop.**

## PREMIER MAKWETLA COMMENDS DISASTER TASK TEAM FOR SPEEDY RESPONSE

Premier Thabang Makwetla commended the Disaster Task Team for its speedy response to rescue storm-ravaged families in the Bushbuckridge Municipality. The Premier was speaking after visiting areas that have been hit by a storm. Affected areas are: Dumphries A, B, C, Athol and parts of Kopeng. Two people, a 7-year old boy and a woman from Dumphries C were killed as a result of the storm while Nineteen people were injured.

Premier Thabang Makwetla, accompanied by MEC for Local Government and Housing, Mrs Candith Mashego-Dlamini, Bushbuckridge Municipality's local councilors visited the affected areas to get first hand information caused by the storm. Sector departments assessed the extent of the damage caused to grazing land,

houses, livestock and infrastructure. The Department of Local Government dispatched a Disaster Management Team and other disaster partners to the scene. They worked around the clock to conduct a full assessment of the damage. The Department of Local Government provided about 1000 blankets and 110 tents. The Department of Social Services delivered tons of food parcels. The Gift of the Givers and other social partners provided humanitarian aid to the affected families.

In the Mbombela Municipality, Siphelanyane Village outside Clau-Clau was also affected by the storm. Several families were left homeless when roof



**HOMELESS: One of the several houses in Dumphries C was left roofless after the storm.**

tops were blown away. MEC Mashego-Dlamini, accompanied by officials from Local Government, Social Services and Education, visited the area to donate food parcels and blankets.



# PLANS TO PROMOTE CULTURAL DIVERSITY GAINS MOMENTUM

**E**butsini Tribal Authority at Elukwatini and Enikwakuyengwa Tribal Authority at Oshoek are the latest traditional authorities that recently held the annual ummamo (cultural function) in May and June respectively. The purpose of the cultural function is to celebrate cultural diversity.

In Mpumalanga, there are 59 traditional leaders. The department of Local Government has set aside money to the tune of R2,7 million for capacity building of traditional leaders. The amount was announced by MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini during her Policy and Budget speech in the legislature. The announcement follows the recent Traditional Council elections in which communities in the rural areas voted in numbers for people to serve in the traditional councils. The elections form part of the process to reconstitute traditional leadership in line with the

Mpumalanga Traditional Leadership and Governance Act of 2005. The cultural function of Ebutsini was attended by Swaziland's Prince Gabheni Dlamini, the son of King Sobhuza II while at Enikwakuyengwa, the function was graced by the Deputy Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders in Mpumalanga, Kgosikgadi Mohlala. As the custodian of history and cultural activities, Amakhosi use the platform to conscientise communities about the importance of history and the need to maintain the traditions. In her address, Kgosikgadi Mohlala praised traditional leaders for promoting cultural diversity and reminding the youth about the importance of knowing their cultures and origin. She also praised them for rallying behind the recent Traditional Council elections. Mpumalanga pioneered the process by becoming the first province to hold them.

As part of the process to reconstitute traditional leadership, The department is in the process of training traditional leaders to participate in municipalities in line with Section 81 of the Municipal Structures' Act. Recently the department introduced allowances for headmen to strengthen their functionality.



**LEADING THE PACK: Prince Gabheni Dlamini (Middle) led a delegation from Swaziland**

## VOTERS CAST BALLOT FOR TRADITIONAL COUNCILS

**I**n a history-making exercise, communities in rural areas went to the polls for the first time to vote for traditional councils. The voting process formed part of the reconstitution of the Traditional Councils in line with the Mpumalanga Traditional Leadership Governance Act of 2005. The Elections were conducted by an Election Agency appointed by the Department of Local Government in the three districts. Results for 40 of the 59 councils have already been released in what is generally described as peaceful elections. In areas such as: Mantjolo, Mbuyane, Lomshiyo, Kgarudi, Madabukela and Maphahlaphahla, the elections are still to be conducted on a date yet to be determined. According to the act, 60% of the membership of traditional council will be selected by the traditional

leaders whilst 40% will be democratically elected by the community under the jurisdiction of that traditional leader. Officials of the department worked overnight to ensure the success of the elections. Ballot papers were sent to the polling stations a day before the elections and voting started at 07h00 until completion. In the Nkangala region, the polls were conducted on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April while in the Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni regions, the elections were held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of May respectively.

Now that the results have been announced, the process for the publication of new Traditional Councils, Proclamation of seats, first sitting of councils, signing of code of conduct and capacity building programmes will

commence. The Department has expressed satisfaction about the manner in which the elections were held and for the community for voting in large numbers.



**QUEUE FOR BALLOTS: A group of women wait patiently outside a voting station to vote in the elections.**

# COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SECTION INTENSIFY CDW STRUCTURES FOR EFFECTIVENESS

Since the introduction of Community Development Workers' (CDW) programmes in 2003, Mpumalanga has recruited more than 400 CDWs. Following the disbandment of cross-border municipalities, the province has in its data base 420 CDWs for the 365 Wards. The successful process of recruiting them is seen as a step towards building a fundamental building block for public service. CDWs are deployed in the wards to assist poor communities to benefit from government services such as poverty alleviation programmes. Their roles include bringing government and communities together. During the recent Policy and Budget speech, MEC for Local Government, Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini said the department has set aside R51 million for the CDW programme. Of this amount, R2 million will be spent on financing the activities of the CDWs, while 49 million rand will be used to pay for their salaries.

The effectiveness of Community

Development Workers (CDW) came under scrutiny recently during a meeting by the Department of Local Government's Community Participation section in Nelspruit, attended by CDW Supervisors from local municipalities. With government intensifying all its programmes under the theme: Business Unusual: All hands on deck to speed up change, the Department of Local Government has intensified the effectiveness of CDWs by appointing District Co-ordinators to enhance their functionality.

- Ms Hazel Ndzimande has been appointed to co-ordinate their functions in Gert Sibande District.
- Ms Thoko Mokoena has been appointed to co-ordinate their functions in Nkangala District.
- John Mogane has been appointed to co-ordinate their functions in Ehlanzeni District.
- The appointments include administrators to further enhance CDW activities.

- Eric Masango will be responsible for the Gert Sibande District.
- Andy Maphanga will be responsible for the Nkangala District.
- Thulisile Marule will be responsible for Ehlanzeni District.

During the meeting, Director for Public Participation, Mr Aaron Mkhabela tabled a Master Plan which details the role of CDWs in servicing the three spheres of government. According to the CDW Provincial Co-ordinator, Mrs Hlanganani Nkosi the Department is in the process of establishing offices for the district co-ordinators. "Apart from the office space issue, we are also looking into the matter of providing them with communication resources such as cell phones and vehicles. We want them to be able to deal with all challenges facing CDWs," she said.

During the elections for traditional councils, CDWs were deployed to assist.



COMMUNITY WORK: A group of delegates, led by Senior Manager for Community Participation, Mr Aaron Mkhabela (extreme right) attended the meeting.

# THIRSTY RESIDENTS COMPLAIN TO PRESIDENT THABO MBEKI



**TAKING LEAD: MEC Mashego-Dlamini directs proceedings during the imbizo at Kamhlushwa Stadium as Premier Makwetla, President Mbeki, Minister Kasrils and Minister Pandor listen.**

Local residents in the Nkomazi Municipality spared no words in telling President Thabo Mbeki about the acute shortage of water in their areas at Kamhlushwa Stadium during a Presidential imbizo. Mbeki visited Mbombela Municipality to assess progress in the construction of the 2010 Mbombela Stadium at Matsafeni and headed down to Nkomazi the following day on a site visit to the Water Pump Station at Block C and later a door to door visit at Block B. President Mbeki, accompanied by Ministers, Premier Thabang Makwetla, MECs including Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini, listened to residents as they complained about an array of issues from lack of IDs to shortage of water. A resident told the President-led entourage that the water shortage problem has left them with no choice but to share water with animals at Tsambokhulu.

In other areas, such as Ngwenyeni, water, according to residents, is available at intervals. "Even the delivery of water by water cans vehicles, is not helping at all because the supply is insufficient," a local resident said.

In his response, Nkomazi Municipality's Mayor, Cllr Johan Mavuso told the audience that a multi-million rand water plant is under construction at Block C to solve the water shortage problem. "We are building a water pumping machine that will supply water at Kamaqhekeza, Block A, B and C. We are spending R23 million for the project," Cllr Mavuso said. He added that a R27 million water pump is being upgraded at Tonga to complement the supply of water in highly affected areas. "In addition to this, we are reconnecting vandalized pipes in areas such as

Mangweni to the tune of R2 million," Cllr Mavuso said.

The Department of Local Government is the driving force behind the Water for All project, one of the five flagship projects introduced by Premier Makwetla. Mpumalanga has set a target of reducing the number of households without access to water by 126 325 by 2009/10. In terms of the APEX priorities, the number of households without clean water should be reduced by half by the year 2014.

President Mbeki described the complains by residents as genuine. He acknowledged the intervention by both the provincial government and the Nkomazi municipality, in dealing with the problem. He promised residents that he will return to check progress on the problem.



**WATER: Construction of a water plant at Block C**



**GRIEVANCES: A resident makes a point during the imbizo at Kamhlushwa Stadium.**

**Mpumalanga  
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