

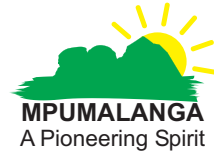
Local News

First Quarter 2009/10



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Department:
Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs
MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT



MPUMALANGA
A Pioneering Spirit

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



SALGA Awards

**Clean water
for cholera-prone area**

**Amakhosi use culture as a
basis for social cohesion**

**Department committed
to clean environment**



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EDITORIAL

Comment

The new financial year started in earnest with changes in the leadership hierarchy. The appointment of the new MEC and the reconfiguration of the department became the talk of the town. Now that the dust has settled down, it is time to get down to business. On that score, we welcome our new MEC, Mr Norman Mokoena and his staff. The speculation about a complete split of the department of Local Government (now Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs) from the Department of Housing (now Department of Human Settlements) came to an end, when the new Premier announced the appointments of MECs. for these two departments.

We congratulate the election of the new NE-HAWU leadership in the department. The election of the leadership was long overdue. The former leadership, led by its branch Chairperson, the late Comrade Kunter Nkosi, served employees for both departments prior to the elections. It was therefore necessary to have in place a leadership which will represent the interests of employees in that particular department. We hope that Comrade Siphon Thumbathi will steer the labour ship to the direction where relations between the employer and the employee will be smoothed at all times for a proper functionality of the department.

The Transversal Section of the department should be commended for promoting an HIV/AIDS voluntary testing for employees as part of its Wellness programme. Programmes such as this are critical as the deadly disease continues fiercely to wipe away our people. Statistically, 3 million people died because of AIDS in 2004 and about 500,000 of these were children and about 40 million people in the world were infected by HIV in 2004. By all accounts, the figures have increased, hence the need to have programmes such as these to mitigate the rapid spread of the disease. We also commend employees who took heed of the call by participating in the test.

We encourage others to do so during their spare time. Health practitioners advise us that it is important to know our HIV/AIDS status so that we can take precautionary measures in the fight against the disease. This will help us live longer. We also encourage all colleagues to live healthy lifestyles.

Running the gruelling Comrades Marathon is not like a walk in the park as it appears. However, for Mr Tablet Sambo one of our officials based in Bushbuckridge, this has become a hobby. He has been running the 84 km race for the past five years from the starting point to the finish within the 12 hour set limit. He has collected medals for participation. We congratulate him for his courage and hope that one day he will bring home the coveted trophy as Siphon Ngomane did. Competing in the enduring sport of athletics is Mr Sambo's favourite. Apart from the Comrades Marathon, he also competes in the provincial athletic competitions, such as the annual Loskop Dam Marathon. For us Mr Sambo is a hero. Bravo!

The department joins our media partner, the SABC News in mourning the untimely death of one of its Senior and respected TV Journos, Mr Johnson Malope. We send our condolences to his family. At the time of his death, 'Grottie' as he was affectionately known, was an Acting Assignment Editor for TV News in Nelspruit. His death is a blow not only to the SABC but to the department too. We regarded him as a valuable partner in the media fraternity in our quest to inform the nation about the department's role in service delivery. He was an entry point to the TV platform in which we are able to communicate with all our stakeholders about what our contribution is to the service delivery machine. May his soul rest in peace!

We hope you will enjoy reading this first edition of the 2009/10 financial year. Send us your comments and suggestions to the following e-mail address: gpmthethwa@mpg.gov.za

MEC's FOREWORD

It is befitting to thank the ANC and the Alliance partners for affording me the opportunity to be part of the leadership collection of the Provincial Executive Council. I am deeply humbled by the confidence shown in me to play a leading role in the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. I would like to pay tribute to all my predecessors, especially Comrade Candith Mashego-Dlamini who had to deal with the mammoth task of leading the combined Department of Local Government and Housing before the split. She has paved the way for me by putting systems in place for the proper functionality of the department to execute its mandate of supporting and monitoring municipalities and ensuring synergy between government and Amakhosi, which will eventually contribute towards rural development. We will continue where she left off.

As we prepared for the elections that were held on 22 April 2009, we visited many areas where we had community meetings and conducted door to door campaigns. It was during the visit that we were exposed to the harsh realities that many of our people still find themselves in. This has also helped me to appreciate the daunting task still facing South Africa in general and Mpumalanga in particular of the need to strengthen the public service for the betterment of people's lives. During my first few days I had an opportunity to meet officials of the department at all levels. I appreciate the internal challenges, such as the problem of office space, which to some extent is a hindrance towards the performance of the department. On the same breath, I appreciate the amount of work that the Acting Head of Department, Mr Sam Ngubane and the team of Senior Managers and the support system at all levels have done to address the office space problem and the strengthening of the department by filling in critical vacancies that were created after the split of the department. I am aware that some sections, Programme 2,3 and 4 in particular, will be moved to buildings outside the Government Complex precinct. I was overwhelmed by the amount of expertise that the department has, which will make my job easier, as a support system.

Although a lot has been done during the past fifteen years to improve the lives of our people by ensuring the effective functionality of municipalities as agents of change, however, a lot still need to be done. Our municipalities need:

- Technical experts if the dream to provide people with clean water has to be realized and credible IDPs in place.
- Financial experts if a clean bill of Financial report has to be received from the Auditor-General.
- Human Resource Management experts if human resources have to be retained.

The training needs that we have planned for municipalities following the outcome of a skills audit, are amongst the interventions that we will implement moving forward. One of the Department's mandate is to assist municipalities if the above has to happen. A lot of work has been done so far. Judging by the annual Provincial SALGA Excellence Awards held in Loskop Dam recently, where in municipalities that



MEC Norman Mokoena

previously recorded poor performance on issues of service delivery demonstrated improvement, one cannot help but to congratulate Executive Mayors, the Councils and Municipal Managers for their enduring efforts to improve the functionality of the third sphere of government. It is not doom and gloom for municipalities which did not make it during the awards. The opportunity is still beckoning.

One of our major challenges is to begin to make people understand that we are now the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and not Local Government. This means we must strengthen the spirit of working together and we must also begin to do things in a more strengthened and committed approach. As President Jacob Zuma said in his State of the Nation Address on 3 June 2009 "In this era of renewal, we will move towards a more interactive government....Staff will handle each public enquiry as if it was the only one, follow it through all the channels until it receives the attention it deserves."

We must live up to the ANC's election slogan: "Together, we can do more". I am looking forward to work with Amakhosi/Makgoshi to make this a reality. I am also looking forward to work with all the people and all structures of the society for the realization of this dream.

My deepest condolences go to the family of the late Comrade Nomvula Shoba who was buried at Machadodorp. After serving the tripartite movement in different capacities, and recently as Provincial Treasurer of COSATU, she selflessly committed herself to serve in government as a Parliamentarian. Her death has robbed the people of this country and Mpumalanga in particular, a leader who served the movement with distinction even at the time when it was unfashionable to do so. We can only honour her unwavering commitment by doubling our efforts to improve the lives of our people.

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE HOD

The new dispensation, which saw the reconfiguration of our department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs has ushered in a new leadership that is expected to take Mpumalanga to another level. We welcome our new Premier, the Honourable Mr David Mabuza and his new Cabinet, which includes our MEC, the Honourable, Mr Norman Mokoena. Our department, formerly Local Government, prides itself to have him as our MEC. I would like to congratulate him for his appointment as well as the support staff in his office. As a department we are looking forward to a fruitful working relationship with him. I believe his appointment will further stimulate our adrenalin to work harder in our quest to improve the lives of our people. On the same vein, I would like extend words of appreciation to our former MEC, the Honourable Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini whom I have had the privilege to work with.

The global economic recession is not doing us any good. It comes at the time when we as a department are in top gear to improve on service delivery. We are working tirelessly with municipalities to ensure the following:

- Credibility of their IDPs as governed by the Municipal Structure's Act.
- Proper alignment of their Budgets as governed by the MFMA.
- Effectiveness of Public Participation as governed by the Municipal System's Act.
- Efficient Disaster Management Plan.

The proper functionality of the third sphere of government is our responsibility. The recent SALGA Excellence Awards could not have come at a better time. The awards serve as a measurement instrument for us as a department to see if the interventions to municipalities as mentioned above, are working. I can say with certainty that indeed they are. There is a great deal of improvement taking place and I must congratulate all successful municipalities, especially the Executive Mayors and the Municipal Managers for their unwavering commitment to ensure that their performance is up scaled.

Our plan in this financial year is to ensure the effective functionality of the 14 Thusong Service Centers to bring government services closer to where people are. We are rolling up our sleeves to ensure that the number of people with access to clean water is increased with the view that the projects aimed at this purpose also create the much needed job opportunities for our people and help us meet the millennium target goals as outlined by the United Nations.



Acting HOD, Mr Sam Ngubane

One of the key interventions we will be introducing is the establishment of the monitoring and support unit which will focus solely on Municipalities. It amongst others, enhance the development and implementation of the performance and management strategy in Municipalities, review their performance and oversight reports. With the Soccer World Cup in sight, we are propelled to double up our efforts in order to complete the construction of the Disaster Management Center in Mbombela which will play host to some of the games.

We will also be launching the Traditional Councils following the elections last year. Our government has committed itself to rural development, and therefore Amakhosi and their subjects are key to the success of the plan. As a department we are best placed to support the functionality of the councils. We will also be training Amakhosi to play a role in the municipal councils.

The global economic recession is bad news for us all. Our budget is shrinking and as such we are obliged to operate on a shoe-string budget to meet our commitments. Our people are losing jobs as companies succumb to the economic pressure. The tax net is shrinking and the budgets will be cut. Despite this, we are determined to achieve our objectives. We are determined to work together with our stakeholders to improve the lives of our people. We must use the projects on service delivery, such as water projects to create job opportunities for our people. We must also ensure that those projects are compliant with the Expanded Public Works Programmes. Recently we reviewed our policies for efficiency. The success of the department depends on a good working relationship between us all. So let us work together.



Department



PACT: Bushbuckridge Municipal Manager, Mr Lisa Cansi, shares a joke with Acting HOD for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Sam Ngubane, after signing documents for the tractors and trailers..



BREAKING NEW GROUND: American volunteers in traditional gear.



LIVING MEMORY: Ms Nombali Lubisi and Ms Sindiso Mhlongo attend the Candle Light Ceremony organized by the department in support of AIDS victims



RANDEZVOUS: MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Norman Mokoena meets officials of the department after assuming office.



SALUTE: Former MEC, Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini, salutes to the Shatleg community during a function to hand over tractors.



WINNING FORMULA: MEC Norman Mokoena and SALGA's Mr Speedo Mashilo rewards Dr J.S Moroka Municipality's Mayor, Cllr Innah Masombuka, for best performance on Communication matters.

in Action



INTERACTION: An official from Lekwa Municipality makes a point during an IDP Analysis Workshop in Brumfelcia



LEADING THE WAY: Chief Malaza of Eesterhoek prepares to take to the stage during the celebration of the annual ummemo.



AT THE HELM: Newly elected branch leaders of NEHAWU in the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs



JUBILATION: Gert Sibande's Speaker, Cllr Maboja-Boltman accompanied by councillors celebrate victoriously. MEC Mokoena looks on as SALGA Chairperson, Mr Speedo Mashilo hands the certificate to them.



TEST DRIVE: Bushbuckridge Mayor, Cllr Milton Morema appreciates one of the tractors donated by the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs to the Mkhuhlu community for waste management



AFRICAN HERITAGE: Chief Nkosi of Ebutsini near Baplaas addresses his subjects during the annual cultural event.

Newly Appointed MEC commits himself to assist Municipalities

Newly appointed MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Norman Mokoena has set the tone for the performance of municipalities in Mpumalanga by appealing to them to work towards the improvement of people's lives. Mr Mokoena was speaking in Loskop Dam during the Provincial SALGA Excellence Awards. His commitment follows an Auditor-General's report in which some municipalities were given unqualified reports and disclaimers. Mr Mokoena says the department will not rest until the situation is improved. "The audit outcomes for the 07/08 financial year are still a matter of great concern. The fact that 7 municipalities received qualified audit reports and 3 received disclaimers means we cannot go to sleep peacefully," Mr Mokoena said. He highlighted skills shortage in municipalities as an area of concern and committed the department to improve on Capacity Building programmes in the different financial year. These will include the following:

- Training of municipal officials on Financial Management NQF level 6 by the University of Wits,
- Training of municipal Debtors and Credit Control officials on Financial Management NQF level 3 by the Southern African Institute for Chartered Accountants (SAICA)
- Training Municipal Managers and Councillors on change management
- Training of Councillors on municipal leadership development

Mr Mokoena says the department has to act pro-actively rather than reactively in cases where municipalities have failed to execute their mandate and placed under Curatorship. "We will be introducing a unit that will focus solely on Performance Monitoring and Support of municipalities. This unit will be headed by a Senior Manager and will amongst other issues ensure the development and implementation of a performance and management system in municipalities, review their performance, oversight reports such as section 46 and annual reports. It will also develop support programmes, support the strengthening of skills and capacities in monitoring survey and evaluation and mobilise resources for interventions in municipalities", the MEC said.

He further appealed to Municipalities to improve the provision of good water quality in their areas. "A recent audit of water

quality known as a Blue Drop Regulatory Report Card 2009 has indicated that a number of Municipalities do not comply with all management for safe drinking water." The interventions are expected to enhance the performance of municipalities, which is improving gradually, judging by the standard of this year's SALGA Excellence Awards.

Meanwhile, MEC Mokoena urged Mayors and Municipal Managers during the provincial Intergovernmental Relations Forum known as the MuniMec to work together by sharing resources. The MuniMec allows the MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and other MECs to interact with the leadership of Local Government. In his address, Mr Mokoena outlined what his expectations are to the Municipalities. He said the Department has been renamed in order to put more emphasis on working together. "Going forward we need to make sure that we do away with working in silos, where you have municipalities clamouring for resources and using them individually, and in some cases not even using it at all, where as working together would have made a bigger impact" said Mr Mokoena. He further stressed that roll overs would not be allowed, as there are still huge backlogs on infrastructure.

MEC Mokoena also outlined five key areas that the department would continuously monitor municipalities on. These are:

- Compliance with legislation, policies and programmes as frameworks for the creation of job opportunities,
- Expeditious rolling out of plans,
- Increased, continuous and regular engagement with the public through the Public Participation Foras,
- Promotion of Private - Public Partnerships to enhance service delivery,
- Provision of services in a sustainable manner.

The MEC also urged municipalities to develop plans to deal with problems that have hindered service delivery in programmes like Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) where the spending was at 81 % instead of 100% as by the end of April 2008, the roll out of Free Basic Electricity which is currently at 49% through out the province, the upgrading and maintaining of Waste Water Treatment Plants.

During the SALGA function, the MEC handed over the SALGA Excellence Awards to the following municipalities.



ACCOLADES: Emakhazeni Municipality was honoured as best local municipality on Disaster Management. The Mayor, Cllr Linky Mohlala receives the award from MEC Mokoena and Mr Speedo Mashilo.

AWARD CATEGORY	MUNICIPALITIES
• Best Local Municipality on Communication	Dr J.S Moroka
• Best District Municipality on Communication	Gert Sibande
• Best District Municipality on Disaster Management Plan	
• Best District Municipality on Good Governance	
• Best Local Municipality on MIG Expenditure	Dipaleseng
• Best Local Municipality on Disaster Management Plan	Thaba Chweu
• Best Local Municipality on Transformation and Organisational Development	
• Best District Municipality with credible IDP	Nkangala
• Best District Municipality on Youth Development	
• Best Local Municipality on Youth Development	Emakhazeni
• Best local municipality on LED	Mbombela

CLEAN WATER FOR CHOLERA PRONE AREA

The outbreak of the Cholera disease in some parts of Mpumalanga has left a trail of devastation. The Marite area, in the Bushbuckridge Municipality was no exception. Statistically, the water borne disease claimed the lives of about 30 victims in Mpumalanga. Drinking of contaminated water is cited as one of the reasons for the outbreak. Residents here drink water from the Ngwaritsi River.

The risk of contracting the disease by residents may come to an end if the joint efforts by the Departments of Cooperative Govern-



OFFICIAL HANDOVER: Former MEC Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini cuts a ribbon to mark the handover of a water purifier. Mayor Milton Morema, Deputy-Minister Mr Malusi Gigaba and Water Affairs Director-General Mr Pam Yako join in.

ance and Traditional Affairs Department of Water and Forestry are anything to go by. A water purification plant worth millions of rands has been installed to provide residents with clean water. The process of providing clean water involves a water pump and huge water pipes which draw water from the river and supply them to a tank where they are mixed with Chlorine before supplying them to the local households. During the tour of the facility, officials of both departments said that the water pump will supply clean water to the local community. "This machine has the capacity to pump 3 million litres of water and supply them to 40 000 households," former MEC for Local Government and Housing, Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini said.

Ms Mashego-Dlamini was accompanied by an entourage of the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Mr Malusi Gigaba, Bushbuckridge Municipality's Mayor, Cllr Milton Morema Water Affairs and Forestry Director-General, Ms Pam Yako, Acting Head of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Sam Ngubane and Senior Government Officials. During the tour, the entourage also visited a mobile water Purifier which has the ability to clean water where ever it is stationed. During a function to hand over the two facilities at the Shatlang Sports Field, Ms Mashego-Dlamini told local residents that the facilities will be used to provide clean water. She added that the provision of clean water is critical in an effort to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases.



CLEANER: A mobile unit was handed over to the Bushbuckridge Municipality

The hand over of the water facilities feeds into government's long term plan, to connect all households with clean water by 2015, in line with the United Nation's Millennium Goals. Ms Yako says as part of the plan, the government is doing its utmost best to accelerate the provision of clean water and the improvement of its quality. "The improvement of the quality of water will help prevent the outbreak of waterborne diseases such as Cholera," Ms Yako said.

Recently, the provincial government launched the Water for all Flagship project at Kamhlushwa as an intervention to accelerate the provision of water to all households by 2010. In Acornhoek, a R158 million project is under construction to build a pipeline that will provide water to residents in Acornhoek.

ENVIRONMENT

DEPARTMENT KEEPS ENVIRONMENT CLEAN

The handing over of tractors and trailers to the Mkhuhlu community, near Hazyview in the Bushbuckridge Municipality marked the completion of a package which the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs promised them. Three tractors and three trailers were handed over to the community as part of the department's commitment to support municipalities in Mpumalanga to maintain a clean environment. The machinery was handed over by the former MEC and was received by the Mayor of Bushbuckridge Municipality, Cllr Milton Morema at the Shatlang Sport Field, at Marite. "The tractors will make it easier for the municipality to keep the environment clean," Cllr Morema said.

Not only does the donation support municipalities in the war against littering, but also feed into Mpumalanga's plan to keep the environment clean. This after the provincial cabinet travelled to Canada on a fact finding mission in 2006 where in the Greening project, as one of the five flagship projects was conceptualized, after the visit. Last year the Bushbuckridge and the Dr J.S Moroka Municipality, shared 200 dustbins, handed over by former MEC Mashego-Dlamini. Poor management of garbage is cited as one of the contributing factors of the cholera outbreak which led to the death of 30 victims. Experts say the garbage flow to local rivers during rainy seasons cause massive water pollution with the potential outbreak of diseases such as Cholera.



Overview of Tekwane South

MEC Mashego-Dlamini urged the local community to work hand in hand with the municipality to keep the environment clean. She said: "A clean environment is a healthy environment. That is why we are handing over these tractors and trailers. We want you to live in a clean, free from pollution environment. But these efforts will be a futile exercise if the community does not take responsibility of the area in its own." Ms Mashego-Dlamini says the handing over of the machinery is done in phases and will be rolled out to other municipalities too.

The department is also assisting municipalities in the establishment of land fill sites. Recently, the department assisted the Msukaligwa Municipality to establish a land fill site in Ermelo.



WASTE CONTROL: Tractors and trailers on display before the hand over

AMAKHOSI USE CULTURE AS A BASIS FOR SOCIAL COHESION



BAYETHE! Inkhosi Mlambo II (with red feathers) is flanked by leader of Swaziland's regiment, Imbali, Mr Ntfojjeni Dlamini (left) and Mr Lusendvo Fakudze (right) during an ummemo.

Chief Mlambo II of Mbuzini, Chief Bheki Mnisi of Mantjolo at Elukwatini and Chief Malaza of Mandlamakhulu Royal Kraal celebrated the annual traditional dance, ummemo recently in style. The annual function attracts hundreds of people where maidens known as Tingabisa and senior citizens known as Lutsango dance before the Chief, to traditional songs in traditional gear, with sticks and shields in their hands. Amakhosi use the functions to revive and sustain cultures and traditional practises. In Mbuzini, outside Komatipoort, Chief Mlambo implored his subjects to go back to the basics of farming. "The government can only go as far as providing you with food parcels and seeds through the Masibuyele Emasimini programmes, to plough the fields. Tilling the land is the answer to the food shortage in the country," Chief Mlambo said. He says previously the locals tilled their fields consistently on the hills of Mbuzini by planting mielies and vegetables and the harvest was good enough to feed the nation. This, he says, was a primitive way of life and has gradually ceased, exposing people to starvation.

Not only do the cultural festivities contribute to social cohesion, but also serve as a platform where the relationship between the government and traditional institution finds expression. In Glenmore, MEC Norman Mokoena addressed Amakhosi during the inauguration of Chief Roy Nkosi of Enikwakuyengwa where in he appealed to them to take lead in the development of rural areas. Mr Mokoena said the department will help equip the offices of Amakhosi to enable them to develop rural areas. "The offices of Amakhosi will be re-



HAIL THE KING: MEC Norman Mokoena hands over a certificate of recognition to Chief Roy Nkosi of Enikwakuyengwa during his inauguration.

sourced with personnel and computers to enable them to take lead in rural development. Amakhosi should advise government on what to do. They must work with municipalities", said Mr Mokoena. Last year, the department conducted elections for the establishment of Traditional Councils. Mr Mokoena added that he will announce members of the Traditional Councils to assist Amakhosi. He says Amakhosi will be inducted to play a role in municipal councils.

Chief Mlambo says the relationship between his traditional council and the local Nkomazi Municipality has led to the development of his tribal area. This, he says, has resulted in the construction of houses for the locals, provision of services such as water and electricity. A local stadium, is also under construction.

The cultural activities have also seen King Mswati III of Swaziland strengthening the relationship between the Swazis in South Africa and in Swaziland. This was evident when His Majesty sent a special representative, Lusendvo Fakudze to the cultural functions and shared with them best practises.



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Local
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Development

Idp
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