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Provincial Government



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Mpumalanga
Provincial Government



Department of Local
Government and Housing

Official Newsletter

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Mpumalanga
Provincial Government



Department of Local
Government and Housing



Deputy President of ANC Jacob Zuma, Prince Lonkhokhelo (Swaziland) and Mr. MS Ginindza (MPL)

**Our Department is dedicated to serve our people and to treat them with respect.
We therefore pledge our whole hearted support to the public.**

VISION

Sustainable Local Government and Better Housing for all.

MISSION

Provision of provincial integrated support and monitoring framework for Sustainable Local Government, Human Settlements and Traditional Leadership towards a better life for all.

VALUES

**Consultation,
Access,
Courtesy,
Information,
Openness and Transparency,
Redress,
Value for Money,
Encouraging Innovation and Rewarding Excellence.**

MEC KC MASHEGO-DLAMINI - FOREWORD

The Department of Local Government and Housing is one of the key departments in the provincial government. This department remains at the coalface of service delivery and it's the entry point to local government. Whatever we do as a department impacts either negatively or positively on our people. If we fail to deliver houses and assist municipalities deliver quality services to our people out there, many of them who have been waiting for a very long time, are the ones who really feel the impact.

As we come to the end of the 2006/2007 financial year, it affords us opportunity to reflect back on the past year, and as we do so we need to ask ourselves the question, have we done what we set out to do in this financial year? In his State of the Province Address, the Premier, Honorable TSP Makwetla has alluded to the fact that we have not performed well as far as housing delivery is concerned. We need to go back to the drawing board and identify the challenges that have affected our ability to deliver houses to our people, whilst doing that we need to find ways of addressing these challenges. Going into the new financial year we cannot afford not to meet the targets we will have set for housing delivery when we still have many people waiting for houses.

Our Local Government system continues to improve. Our achievements in this sphere can best be depicted by the performance of our municipalities at the National Vuna Awards, where Nkangala won the award for the best District Municipality and Steve Tshwete won the award for the best Project Consolidate municipality. We would once again like to congratulate these two municipalities for the good work that they have done and urge all our other municipalities to work extra hard and prepare themselves for the 2007 Vuna Awards. Through the Five Year Local Government

Strategic Agenda (2006-2011) we will continue to intensify our support in Local Government.

We still need to be cognizant that there is still a lot of work that must be done at local government level. We must increase the number of households that have access to basic water and electricity and those that are enjoying free basic services. Through our Municipal Infrastructure Grant we will continue to address the infrastructure backlogs that face our communities.

The department has been at the forefront of the bucket eradication project. Through this project we have been able to eradicate a total of 18 617, buckets in the process bringing decent sanitation to the same number of households. In rolling out this project we have learnt a number of lessons that will be beneficial to us as a department and the provincial government when rolling out projects of this magnitude in future. Some of the key lessons that we have learnt are:

- There must be effective utilization of intergovernmental relations when rolling out projects of this magnitude. We must pull together all the resources and expertise from the different spheres of government
- We must ensure that we have efficient and effective project managers who have the capacity to monitor these projects
- Ensuring that there is clear and efficient communication with all stakeholders and amongst the different spheres of government.

The province has identified five flagship projects known as the "Big Five". These flagship projects have been identified in order to accelerate development in the province. These flagships are the Maputo Development Corridor, Moloto Development Corridor, the revitalization of our tourism by sponsoring the restoration,



**Ms. Candith Mashego-Dlamini MEC
Local Government and Housing**

preservation and packaging of our heritage and the greening of Mpumalanga to become South Africa's green region through conservation management, the roll out of water infrastructure to provide water for all in the province in sustainable way and the acceleration of management capacity building in government.

The Department of Local Government and Housing will be responsible for the Water for All flagship project. As indicated earlier this project will provide infrastructure to ensure that all people have access to basic water. It will also progressively move people up the water services ladder. We shall be working closely with the Local and District municipalities and the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry.

I would like to express my profound gratitude at the warm reception that I received from the department and its different stakeholders, when I was deployed to it in mid February 2007. I hope that we shall work together and achieve our objective of providing a better life to our people.

We have reached the end of the last quarter of the 2006/2007 financial year, and it is time to produce our last quarterly newsletter for the year. It is no exaggeration to say that MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini has hit the ground running since her arrival in the Department of Local Government and Housing. As will become evident as you page through the contents of this magazine, we have ensured coverage of key forums and events where the MEC has outlined the vision of the Department going forward. We look forward to working together with the MEC to improve service delivery in the department.

Since the beginning of the year there have been several important gatherings where the department has assembled or been represented, and it is important that we take stock of the discussions that have taken place and the goals and strategies that have been identified as a result of these interactions. During the Department's annual Legkotla ways and means of streamlining and increasing the efficiency of internal processes were identified as a means of enhancing the Department's overall effectiveness. In this issue we also

report on the Department's Special Project Consolidate Steering Committee meeting held early in March. The meeting provided an opportunity for celebrating some of the successes of Project Consolidate since its launch in October 2004 as an intervention for improving the performance and capacity of municipalities, as well as the opportunity to workout challenges which still remain and come up with possible plans to address them.

We also look at the role being played by Community Development Workers in contributing to municipal delivery. Recognising the fact that all the Department's activities have essentially to do with people, we bring you true stories relating to how the programmes that drive us are impacting on ordinary people's lives. We also focus on a few housing rebuilding efforts aimed at addressing the plight of people who suddenly become homeless due to natural incidents and accidents, and add some colour with our coverage of cultural events celebrating the institutions of traditional leadership and culture. As always, we hope that you will be interested and informed as you go through this publication.

EHLANZENI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY HOSTS LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUMMIT

On the 06th and 07th March 2007, Ehlanzeni District Municipality held its Local Government Summit at the Crocodile Country Inn in Nelspruit. The purpose of the Summit was to reflect on the roles of the district municipality and on how communities view the role of the District. Moreover looking at improving understanding of the core business of the municipality to the satisfaction of the communities that are served. The idea of the summit also came as a result of the Presidential IMBIZO that took place last year August as it was realized during the interaction process that most of the community members are unable to differentiate roles played by the three spheres of government, hence Ehlanzeni District Municipality took an initiative of ensuring that there is a sense of Correctness in the form of responses from representatives of local community structures. The MEC

for Local Government and Housing, Ms KC Mashego-Dlamini attended and delivered the keynote address. Also present were the Executive Mayor of Ehlanzeni Cllr CN Mkhonto, the Executive Mayor of Mbombela Cllr J Nsiband, Executive Mayors of the municipalities falling under Ehlanzeni District, Councillors, delegates from the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), Municipal Managers, government officials and other interested parties.

In her keynote speech, MEC Mashego-Dlamini took the opportunity to congratulate municipalities in those areas where progress had been achieved, while simultaneously encouraging and exhorting them to strive for improvement in persisting problem areas. She described the present, second term of democratic local government as a period requiring the



MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini giving her Keynote Address

accelerated delivery of services. The MEC made particular reference to the national targets that have been set for all municipalities. She stated that all involved would need to work harder to achieve access to clean and decent sanitation for all by 2010, access to electricity for all households by 2012, universal provision of free basic services and the eradication of the bucket-toilet system by year-end 2007. MEC Mashego-Dlamini proudly pointed out that the last target had been achieved by the end of 2006 in Mpumalanga.



Ms. Mercia Colbert giving a presentation on the Relationship, Roles and Responsibility of Councillors and Community Development Workers by SALGA

She urged all the gathered municipalities to conduct internal audits in order to determine how far they have gone in implementing the resolutions of the Department's Local Government Summit held in December, 2005. She

further appealed to all those present to keep in mind and ceaselessly pursue the commitments undertaken during Ehlanzeni District's Growth and Development Summit towards the end of last year. She emphasized that Local Government had a critical role to play in the push to halve poverty in the country by 2014, as it was at the coalface of community development and delivery. While extending warm accolades to those municipalities in the province who did the Mpumalanga province proud in the National Vuna Awards of Excellence in Local Government, she stated that greater participation was expected in future from the municipalities of Ehlanzeni District. MEC Mashego-Dlamini concluded her keynote address by revisiting the need for Local Government to create and maintain open lines of communication between itself and the communities to which it seeks to deliver. She pointed out that the roll-out of Multi-Purpose Community Centers was one way of ensuring that citizens can access government information at all times.

The summit further encouraged the tradition of building strong relationship with the community members with the view of moving towards a developmental local government that is reflective of the people's expectations. Strong emphasis was also made on public participation, as local government is at the coalface of service delivery. The summit had the following objectives: To promote understanding of Local government Legislative framework, To initiate processes towards the alignment of planning and budgeting process amongst the spheres of government within the district, To promote and strengthen good governance and To encourage and promote public participation.

Other highlights of the two-day summit were the various presentations that were eloquently tabled by various government officials and municipal representatives, including one on Public Participation and Citizen Involvement by the Head of Department of Local Government and Housing, Ms GN Sibeko. During the question and answer sessions which followed these presentations, most of the concerns seemed to centre around the role of Community Development Workers and the possible duplication of roles with the Ward Committees. In the



Mr. Sam Ngubane giving a presentation on Public Participation and Citizen Involvement

end, the consensus was that the main focus should be on working together to improve the lives of all in our communities.

More than 400 guests attended the summit and the delegation comprised the following: Sector Departments, Non-Governmental Organizations, Ward Committee Members, Councillors, Community Development Workers, Community Based Organization, Traditional Leaders, Business Sector, Parastatals and Religious groups

Other topics presented were as follows: The Relationship Between the Three Spheres of Government by Premier's Office: Mr M Mgidi, Relationship, Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors and Community Development Workers by SALGA: Ms M Colbert, Integrated Development Planning by Ehlanzeni District Municipality: Mr N Mkhathswa, Public Participation and Citizen Involvement by Local Government and Housing: Mr S Ngubane and Linkage between Local Government Planning, Performance, Monitoring and Service Delivery by Local Government and Housing: Mr O Pilane.



The Executive Mayor of EDM, Cllr. Khosi Mkhonto giving her welcome Address

DEPARTMENT HOLDS A SPECIAL PROJECT CONSOLIDATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The Department of Local Government and Housing held a two day Special Project Consolidate Steering Committee Meeting where the MEC, Ms KC Mashego-Dlamini delivered a key-note address.



MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini Giving her keynote address

The purpose of the Special Project Consolidate Committee Meeting was to review progress realised in terms of improved service delivery at all the nominated municipalities during the past two years.

In her key note address the MEC, highlighted the Quick Wins that the province has achieved as a result of Project Consolidate in the past two years. She said that the Quick Wins came as a result of dedication and hard work by the municipalities involved.

MEC Mashego-Dlamini noted that Mpumalanga municipalities have achieved much through Project Consolidate in the past two years. Some of these achievements, which were recorded as Quick Wins or Early Deliverables include: the eradication of the bucket toilet system, the continuous provision of emergency and sanitation relief programmes in the

rural areas, the procurement of refuse removal trucks and equipment for municipalities, the recruiting, training and deployment of CDW's and the piloting of anti-corruption strategies in several municipalities.

The MEC made special mention of the winners of the 2006 National Vuna Awards of Excellence where Nkangala District, for the second time in a row, took the first prize at district level while Steve Tshwete local municipality won the best Project Consolidate Municipality Award. She said this bore testimony to the successes Project Consolidate has made out of the municipalities in the Province. She encouraged other municipalities to emulate or surpass Nkangala and Steve Tshwete municipalities.

MEC Mashego-Dlamini further stated that those municipalities who were failing to fill vacant posts for section 57 managers needed monitoring and support from the province. Municipalities that still have vacant posts at the level of section 57 managers needed to be assisted. The department must provide hands on support to the municipalities by arranging a smooth transition where there is no vacuum left after the end of a contract



The panel of presenters answering questions

and commencement of a new one .

In future the department will create a database of all section 57 managers, track all their contracts and check their date of expiry so that the department will know when each contract expires and advise the affected municipality on time to start the process of advertising the post and follow the normal processes for seamless transition and uninterrupted service delivery.

The ensuing deliberations during the meeting, proposed ways of dealing with the challenges facing municipalities to deliver basic services to the communities. In the meeting, the MEC requested the delegates to also find out if the hands on support is working for the municipalities and whether the assistance given to them helps them to understand and tackle the challenges on service delivery. She added that the meeting had to find out how much skills were gained by the managers during the past two years in Project Consolidate and were there any positive spin-offs during the hands-on-support? These and other issues fuelled the discussions as the meeting continued.

CON'T OF PROJECT CONSOLIDATE COMMITTEE MEETING

It was agreed that an Action Plan that is aligned to the 5 year Local Government Strategic Agenda encompassing all departments that are involved with service delivery in municipalities be developed, and that it should include all the remaining municipalities that were not originally nominated for Project Consolidates in the province.

It emerged that issues of Municipal Organisational Development and Institutional Transformation as well as Knowledge and Information Management remain critical challenges facing our municipalities. Other challenges facing municipalities include poor project management skills, unhealthy relationships between District and local municipalities, inadequate billing and debt collection systems, a limited tax base and slow infrastructure delivery that hinders a progressive roll out of free basic services.

During the meeting there were presentations by resource persons from the National Department of Provincial and Local Government. Some of the presentations were on Knowledge Management by Ms Musa Jack. Monitoring and evaluation system by Mr Laurie Seal. Alignment of PGDS and IDP's with the 5 year Local Government strategic agenda by Mr Richard Captain from the Office of the Premier. Finally National perspective on 5 year Local Government strategic agenda implementation by Mr Tozi Faba, Deputy Director General in the National Department of Provincial and Local Government.

The meeting went on to map out the way forward and some of the resolutions include;

- Sector departments must be involved in the budget planning and budget review processes of municipalities.
- The CDW unit will utilize



Mr Tozi Faba Deputy Director General from Department of Provincial and Local Government making a presentation

funds allocated to them for

the appointment of additional CDWs to address wards without CDW's

- The Province will use the platform of the Deputy President's next Imbizo visit to advance requests in areas needing support and intervention in our municipalities.
- The Annual Financial Statements and Audit Reports Support Plan developed by the Department of Local Government and Housing must be incorporated into the municipal action plans to be able to approach service delivery in a more coordinated way.



Officials attending the Special Project Consolidate meeting

The Department in Action



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1. MEC Candith Mshego-Dlamini receives a copy of the letter of commitment to the Joseph Matsebula Secondary School
2. Joseph Mathebula Secondary School Choir from Nkomazi in full swing during the inauguration of MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini
3. MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini giving her Keynote Address at the Ehlanzeni District Local Government Summit at Crocodile Inn
4. MEC Mashego-Dlamini handing over a Salga Award to Bushbuckridge Municipality during the SALGA Provincial Members Assembly
5. Mr. Oupa Pilane presenting on Linkage between Local Government Planning, Performance, Monitoring and Service Delivery
6. Deputy President of the ANC Jacob Zuma, Prince Lonkhokhelo (Swaziland) and MPL MS Ginindza at the uMmema at eMbhuleni
7. Executive Mayor of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan, Duma Nkosi, Deputy Speaker of the Legislature, Hon BJ Nobunga, MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini and Cllr Speedy Mashilo presenting a SALGA Award to the Deputy Executive Mayor of Ehlanzeni District Municipality, Cllr Selby Khumalo.
8. Isigila Semnikati performing at eMbhuleni
9. MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini receives the honorary Sash at her Inauguration at Joseph Matsebula Secondary School
10. Former MEC Jabu Mahlangu welcomes a Cuban delegation of professionals to the department
11. Officials attending the Departmental Lekgotla listening to a presentation
12. 88 year old Gogo Zitha in her new house

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SAMARIA ZITHA GETS HOUSE AFTER 60 YEARS OF WAITING



88 year old gogo Samaria Zitha

On the 12th December 2006, the former MEC for Local Government and Housing in the province at the time, Mr JL Mahlangu handed over 16 houses to beneficiaries from the village of Kwa Dela, among whom was Gogo Samaria Zitha. This handover was the culmination of an initiative begun as part of the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women in November 2006, and marked the Department of Local Government and Housing's contribution, building houses for women who have been affected by violence.

Today 88 year old Gogo Zitha says with a smile and an energetic clap of the hands that life has been good to her in her old age. "I had given up hope of



Gogo Zitha expresses her joy

ever owning my own home, but I thank this government for giving me a chance to rest in the twilight of my life," she said emotionally. She adds that even her death will be a peaceful one because she can rest easy in the knowledge that her children and grandchildren will always have a secure place that they can call home. Samaria Zitha had tears in her eyes, they are, she says with a smile and a slow wave of the hand, tears of joy and gratitude. We left her with the firm conviction that, despite what the critics might say, delivery is taking place and changing people's lives everyday.



Former MEC for Local Government and Housing Jabu Mahlangu and CDW Ms. N. Khumalo take Gogo Zitha to her new House



Gogo Zitha's prepares to enter her new house

SALGA PROVINCIAL MEMBERS ASSEMBLY

On the 07-09 March 2007, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) in Mpumalanga, held its Provincial Members Assembly in Badplaas. The opening address was presented by the Premier of Mpumalanga, The Honourable TSP Makwetla, who spoke about the critical role that local government would have to play in ensuring the major developmental programmes of the province succeed. In particular, he systematically outlined the roles and inputs that would be necessary from municipalities in order for the province's 'Big Five' Flagship projects to have a positive impact on the lives of ordinary people in the province.



Chairperson of SALGA Mpumalanga, Cllr Speedy Mashilo and MEC Mashego-Dlamini at the SALGA Gala Dinner

Premier Makwetla spoke of the need for "strong political and management leadership from local government", if the "Water for All by 2010" project was to have any chance of success. Key in this regard would be the properly managed spending of the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) and other financial resources, and the development and deployment of the required technical expertise. Premier Makwetla described the 'Heritage, Greening Mpumalanga and Tourism' flagship project as one that combined responsible use of the environment with creative pioneering of opportunities for economic growth, both areas requiring extensive contribution from local government structures and communities. With reference to the Maputo and Moloto Development Corridors, the Premier stressed the need for local municipalities along these corridors to become involved in the process of identifying and creating economic development opportunities based on these routes and the growth they will generate. Premier Makwetla stated that the 'Accelerated Capacity Building' flagship project underscored the firmly held belief of the provincial government that proper management lies at the heart of government's



MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini giving her keynote address

capacity to deliver. He pointed out that the enhancement of management skills for senior and middle management supervisors was a primary target of this project.

Speaking at the Gala dinner on the night before the official opening, MEC for Local Government and Housing, Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini started her address with a reminder of the key objectives of local government as defined in the national constitution. She mentioned the impressive progress that has been and continues to be made as all municipalities pursue the goals set out in the Five Year Local Government Strategic Agenda. The MEC applauded the commitment of the Nkangala, Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni district municipalities for successfully planning and hosting their Growth and Development Summits. She also expressed her approval of the 100% submission of IDPs by all 21 municipalities and stated that the filling



MEC Mashego-Dlamini and Cllr Speedy Mashilo handing over a SALGA Award to the Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande Cllr Andries Gamede

of critical vacant management positions in municipalities was continuing progressively. The MEC noted that a solution needed to be found to recover the substantial service payments still owed to municipalities by different institutions including government departments. The important contributions being made by Ward Committees and Community Development Workers was raised by the MEC, while in the same breath she indicated that programmes would be to run further the development and effectiveness of these groups. MEC Mashego-Dlamini said that more Multi-Purpose Community Centres would continue to be built to bring services closer to the people, and expressed her commitment to working together with SALGA towards ensuring progress in all spheres of local government.



MEC Mashego-Dlamini handing over a Salga Award to Bushbuckridge Municipality

National Executive Member of SALGA, Executive Mayor of Greater Sekhukhune District, Cllr Dickson Masemola also addressed the gathering on the different challenges that they, as SALGA, have identified with regard to the continued improvement of local government. He spoke of the need to enhance the performance of municipalities through increased capacity, more comprehensive management of the contentious former cross-border municipalities, and the all-round acceleration of service delivery. Mayor Masemola confronted the question of corruption and stated that the Local Government Anti-Corruption Strategy focusing on prevention, detection and investigation would go a long way towards rooting out this scourge. He said the implementation of the Integrated Development Plans in all municipalities and the promotion of increased community participation were central to the achievement of government's plan to halve poverty by 2014, and concluded that the SALGA gathering had been "for the greater good of the people of this province".

NTOMBIKAYISE HLABANGANE OF MSOGWABA (MBOMBELA MUNICIPALITY) THANKS DEPARTMENT



Ms. Ntombikayise enjoying the comfort of her new home

gradually began to disintegrate. Ntombikayise, a single mother of four and a budding entrepreneur who sells foodstuffs and other refreshments from her residence, recalls the insecurity she felt for her family and customers when she realized the structure was sinking and the walls falling apart. Like so many who have been ripped off by building contractors who offer sub-standard services (robbing not only housing beneficiaries but even government itself), her dream house began to turn into a nightmare. She painfully recalls suffering further injury to her disabled leg due to the fact that the foundation of the house had become unstable because of gradual sinking.

This is where the Department of Local Government and Housing moved in swiftly to avert the crisis that was looming over Ntombikayise's household. When she reported her problem to her Ward Councillor Benjamin Maseko, he speedily organized for officials from the Nelspruit Town Council to come and look at the crumbling house. A Housing official from the Mbombela Municipality then facilitated the involvement of Housing officials from the provincial department, who helped her to access funding from the Housing Subsidy Grant (special circumstances). "Since then what I have experienced in terms of the dedication and commitment of your staff in the Department has been truly amazing. These are people who are really interested in helping those who need assistance in our communities", says a grateful Ntombikayise.

Proving that the

Department is just as dedicated in its follow-up care and assistance as it is in rendering initial assistance to subsidized housing beneficiaries, Ntombikayise's house was essentially rebuilt from scratch to ensure that she and her family could inhabit a structure that was both stable and secure. Apparently, the structure was so shaky at this point that the house was demolished almost entirely by hand. She says that she was pleasantly surprised when the new house was completed within the space of a month. Even when the house was being rebuilt, Ntombikayise speaks with admiration about the constant site visits by Department officials who were anxious that the mistakes of the initial building effort should not be repeated. "For what they have done for me and my family, I consider the people in the Department of Local Government and Housing as part of my family," Ntombikayise says, proving that true government is about touching people's lives meaningfully.



Ms. N. Hlabangane's new house completed within a month

MEC CANDITH MASHEGO-DLAMINI IS INAUGURATED AS PATRON OF JOSEPH MATSEBULA SECONDARY SCHOOL

On 13th March 2007 the MEC for the Department of Local Government and Housing, Candith Mashego Dlamini was inaugurated as the patron of Joseph Matsebula Secondary School in Driekoppies.



MEC Candith Mashego-Dlamini receives the honorary Sash

Guests and visitors came from near and far and sat attentively, braving the intense heat of the Lowveld sun.

The school was built by a private bus company, BUSCO which operates the local bus routes. BUSCO undertook this initiative in response to the former President, Nelson Mandela's call for private companies to assist the government in building schools in the formerly disadvantaged areas. The executive mayor for Nkomazi, Cllr Johannes Mavuso revealed that the MEC was a former teacher herself. He expressed the hope that she should feel at home when she has to deal with school issues and will easily fit into the system of things in the school.

MEC Mashego - Dlamini is a well-known person in the area and has her constituency office in

Driekoppies. Speaker after speaker praised the MEC for honouring their invitation and accepting the patronship of the school.

After having signed the commitment book and having the honorary sash placed over her shoulders, the MEC delivered her inauguration speech which was punctuated by appreciative applause. "I thank the school, the parents and the students for appointing me as the patron of this school. I thank you for having faith in my abilities to assist in the development of this school," the MEC said in her response to the praises she received from the previous speakers.

The MEC said that she would do her best to assist the school develop and make sure that the different phases of development at the school, as mentioned by other speakers will definitely go ahead as planned. She said that she can only succeed in her attempts to develop the school if the School Governing Body (SGB), the parents and the local business community work together with her. MEC Mashego-Dlamini extended a challenge to the pupils of this beautiful school to produce very high marks and be a beacon of success in the region.



Some of the students at Joseph Matsebula Secondary School

The MEC said that she has the desire to give 200% in her endeavours to improve the school. She said that as an indication she would soon donate computers for the pupils to use and develop their skills in working with computers.

The MEC also warned the students not to allow their lives to be ruled by drugs. She said that many children in other schools have been found to be affected by drugs and alcohol and their lives have been ruined. They have become dependent on these addictive and harmful substances. All those drug users are now school drop-outs and this has negatively affected their families. If they are not yet drug addicts they are the ones who are giving educators and learners a hard time by being undisciplined at their schools. She warned them not to make friends with those people who are drop outs and said they must report any suspicious people who appear to be peddling and doing drugs. The MEC also reminded the pupils that HIV-AIDS is a killer and stressed that they should abstain from sex until they are married.



The Joseph Matsebula School Choir in full swing

DEPARTMENTAL LEKGOTLA AT SABIE

On the 18th and 19th of January 2007, Senior officials from the Department of Local Government and Housing took a two day working session to Lone Creek Lodge in Sabie where the review of the 9 months departmental performance and the consolidation of the detailed implementation plan was done.

during the justification and motivation of the budget the requested allocation is not agreed upon or approved, then the concerned directorate will have to adjust the funding of their operations accordingly.

As part of the proceedings a motivational speaker, Ms Nadine Lubber, brought out the lighter side of the otherwise tense and sober proceedings of the Lekgotla. Exercises that were offered by the motivational speaker were meant to make people aware and understand how important communication is, and the tendency people have of assuming that the message has been conveyed correctly. The challenges Ms Lubber identified could bring about serious service delivery issues because of miscommunication. An interesting point that came out of the motivational speaker's presentation was that how we look at an object and interpret it in our minds may not necessarily be the same interpretation of that Object by another person.

Clearly a lot of hard work went into preparations to set up objectives and the allocation of funds to the directorates as there were not many questions asked. It is important that proper planning and budget management is done early before



HOD Sibeko addressing the Lekgotla

the beginning of a new financial year so that it is possible for each directorate to fund all its mandates and make service delivery a success.

The Last refinement and consolidation of the Operational Plan will be done immediatel after the SONA and SOPA so as to include the policy statements by the Premier/President in our plans.

All done and fixed, service delivery must go ahead and it is expected that the department will be able to achieve its goals.



Delegates attending the Lekgotla listening to a presentation



A motivational speaker, Ms. Nadine who kept the delegates awake through out her motivational period

On the first day the focus was on the 9 months wherein Chief Directorates and Directorates grilled one another for non performance on certain objectives and commended each other on work well done. The second day the focus was on the refinement and consolidation of the operational plan for 2007/2008 financial year.

Discussions were held on the setting up of objectives and the funding of departmental operations. Finances are contemplated and approved for the implementation of programmes run by the Department. Directorates are expected to motivate and justify the amount of money they want to spend on their programmes. If

UMMEMO E-MBHULENI



Prince Makhosonke Dlamini of Embhuleni, Deputy President of ANC Jacob Zuma and Prince Lonkhokhelo (Swaziland)

This customary traditional gathering at eMbhuleni in Badplaas started on the 4th March 2007 and continued till the following day. This is an annual gathering of the subjects of the Chief to remind themselves of traditional customs, a sort of revival of traditional customs and practices.

The Chief calls the uMmemo to the royal kraal of eMbhuleni for cultural dances and the demonstration of other traditional modes of behaviour and expression at the kraal. This especially helps the youth not to forget their roots and remain morally bound by their tradition and customs.



Imbali yase Swatini

Saturday was where all showcased their skills in traditional dance and traditional dress. Visitors had time to watch a truly

African style of life in the traditional order. Africans are a generally joyous people and therefore their life revolves around song, dance and respect. Whatever they do, they sing. No complete undertaking or chore can be done without the customary accompaniment of a song.

Times of happiness as well as times of grief are usually punctuated by the sounds of song in Africa.

At this gathering, many groups got to show off their dancing skills and traditional dress.

The following day saw the main speakers give their speeches and calling on the youth to remain faithful to their traditions and never forget their roots. The guest of honour was the ANC Deputy President, Mr Jacob G Zuma. The Chief, Cambridge Makhosonke Dlamini welcomed and thanked the ANC Deputy President for making time to come to attend the uMemmo and also thanked all the guests for coming. He stated that we as Africans cannot change, we will remain Africans and our culture and tradition will stay as it is. "The reason and purpose of this gathering is to remind ourselves of

the importance of our tradition and culture," Chief Dlamini said. The youth in particular were encouraged to remain as African as possible and not be swept off their feet by foreign cultures.

The Deputy President of the ANC said that he was very pleased at attending this function and noting that people here still take their culture and tradition very seriously. "Tradition identifies you among many nations and gives you that added respect," Zuma said. He appealed for tradition and customs to be taught at schools as every child ought to know their roots. He said he was pleased to see government officials successfully working together with traditional leaders on matters of development and urged them to continue to support each other at all times. "It is important to work together as a nation and understand traditions and customs," Zuma advised.



Isigila Semnikati

In concluding his address Zuma again thanked the traditional leaders for organising the uMmemo and thanked other chiefs from as far as Bushbuckridge for supporting and attending. Zuma said that we should continue with this tradition and show it to our children so that the coming generations will also understand who they are.