



**cogta**

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

# LOCAL NEWS

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## VISION

Intergrated sustainable people  
centred development

## MISSION

Facilitate and co-ordinate Intergovernmental  
Structures and Developmental Agencies for  
Sustainable Intergrated Service Delivery  
through Public Participation and  
Traditional system of governance

## *Disclaimer*

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*We would like to hear from you*

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# MEC's FOREWORD



## HON. SPD SKHOSANA MEC FOR COGTA

Beneath the 20th years celebration of democracy is the remarkable improvement of the lives of ordinary people following the decades of the injustice system which subjected them to inhuman conditions. The 2011 Stats SA report gives credence to the government's improvement of the lives of the people. In Mpumalanga, the report shows a significant increase of households with access to water from 77.1% (829 200) to 87.4% (939 959). By increasing the number, the government is setting the tone towards the achievement of the United Nation's Millennium targets, of reducing by half, the number of people without water by 2015.

As we celebrate the 20 years of our democracy, we also celebrate the marked increase of people with access to sanitation. The 2011 Census report shows that the number of households with access to sanitation has increased from 53.9% to 93.7%. The construction of 20 399 VIP toilets is an empirical evidence that our people enjoy unrestricted access to sanitation facilities. Access to electricity has increased from 81.7% to 89.8%. 18 419 job opportunities have been created through the Community Works' Programme (CWP), thereby exceeding the target of 17 000 set for the 2013/14 financial year.

As we prepare for the 2014/15 financial year and the beginning of a five year term of the new administration after the elections in May 2014, we are determined to continue changing the lives of our people. We look forward to work with municipalities, sector departments, Emakhosi, the private sector and our communities to make Mpumalanga a better place to live in.

The poor municipal audit outcomes of the 2012/13 financial year remain a matter of concern. Only two municipalities, Ehlanzeni District and Steve Tshwete obtained clean audits. The focus of the department, working together with Provincial Treasury and the three districts will be the upscale of support for municipalities to improve the outcomes as per the recommendations of the Auditor-General (A-G). An audit action plan has been developed and municipalities have to implement it for the realization of Operation Clean Audit 2014. Part of the action plan include filling of critical vacancies, and as such we have made progress in this regard. On the same vein, we welcome the newly appointed Municipal Managers of the Nkangala District and Dr J.S Moroka Municipalities, Ms Margaret Skhosana and Mr Benny Mahlangu respectively, in our fold. We look forward to their contribution in an effort to turn around municipalities. We assure them of our support and we hope that their experience in working in the municipal space will be a good one.

The support of the department to municipalities will also be upscaled in the area of MIG spending. Over the years, municipalities have been slow in spending the grant. Delays in the approval of projects by municipal councils and lack of expertise are amongst the sources of these delays. The deployment of experts through the MISA programme is one of the key interventions to tackle the challenge head on. We appeal to municipalities to co-operate

We support unequivocally the South African Local Government Association's (SALGA) pledges on Anti-Corruption adopted during a summit recently. Significant strides have been made in the fight against corruption through improved oversight and accountability mechanisms in municipalities, such as the establishment of Municipal Public Accounts Committees (MPACs) and institutional systems and internal controls. There has also been a significant increase in the number of prosecutions and convictions. The eradication of corruption will restore public confidence.

# MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE HOD



**MR DAVID MAHLOBO**  
**HEAD OF DEPARTMENT**

The recent heavy rains have left a trail of devastation in many parts of the country. Although the Nkomazi Municipality was the hardest hit, however, several death cases were recorded elsewhere in the province. Twelve people died as the torrential rains persisted for several days. The death cases were recorded in Badplaas, Piet Retief, Schoemansdal, Greylingstad, Ermelo and Komatipoort. Our deepest condolences to the bereaved families.

The devastation could have been worse, had it not been the joint effort by our department, the police, the emergency services and the municipalities. Several lives were rescued as a result of this joint effort. We commend all officials who participated in the disaster management effort for their tireless efforts to save the lives of our people. We are a caring government and we must live up to this expectation. We commend all our people who took heed of the message not to risk their lives by crossing overflowing rivers, water streams and dams. We are working hard in collaboration with sector departments to repair the affected roads, bridges, schools, houses and water pumps so that our people can reclaim their normal lives back. It may take some time, however, we appeal for patient.

The plan to provide clean water and proper sanitation remains on track. The recent connection of water to villages in the Bushbuckridge Municipality is a case in point. Premier David Mabuza, Minister of Water Affairs, Edna Molewa and

MEC for COGTA, Simon Skhosana launched the Bushbuckridge Integrated Water Project at Sidlamakhosi village to mark the provision of water to communities in that area. The project connects from Inyaka Dam to provide water to 6 villages in the Bushbuckridge Municipality, namely, Skukuza, Violet Bank, Retanga, Mathule, Shalden and Relani A (Maromeng).

We are spending R12 million for the bulk infrastructure and in this project, we have installed water pipes, taps and reservoirs for the efficient supply of water to our people, who used to travel long distances to fetch water. The supply makes the twenty years celebration of democracy meaningful for our people in Bushbuckridge. We appeal to them to use the water sparingly and to protect the infrastructure jealously, considering that government has a limited budget.

Parliament has just passed the bill for land redistribution in the country. This bill seeks to address the effects of the infamous Land Act of 1913, in which our forefathers woke up one morning and found themselves foreigners in the land of their birth. During the opening of the National House of Traditional Leaders, President Zuma appealed to all of us, especially in the tribal areas, whose land was dispossessed, to take advantage of this opportunity, by submitting applications. We have until March 2018 to claim back our land. We appeal to legal practitioners, Amakhosi and the professionals in our communities to assist our people in this exercise.

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between our department, municipalities and the South African Police Services (SAPS) is a major step to end land invasion. A number of cases have been reported relating to allocation of land by unscrupulous individuals masquerading as traditional leaders. The MOU seeks to achieve the following:

- To ensure that the Traditional Council, after consultation with the Municipality, identifies and plan land use and land management schemes;
- To ensure that the Department support the municipality and the traditional council in the manner that is compatible with relevant applicable legislation.
- To ensure that the Department facilitate the effective and efficient implementation of this MOU.
- To ensure that SAPS enforce law and order in areas of jurisdiction of traditional leaders.
- To ensure that SAPS assist with the process of combating unlawful land invasion.
- Ensure that SAPS assist with the enforcement of court orders sought by Traditional leader and the Municipality with regard to land invasion.

Let us all support this initiative to bring to an end to land invasion.

# Premier Mabuza gives the status quo report of municipalities during SOPA



**MUNICIPAL SUPPORT:** Premier David Mabuza gave an account of support for municipalities during the state of the province address.

Premier David Mabuza says a great deal of improvement has been recorded in municipalities over the past five years. Delivering a State of the Province address in Nelspruit recently, Mr Mabuza said the social distance between councillors and the communities, a deteriorating financial health, an administrative and political hindrances were some of the challenges faced by municipalities. He says the intervention of the provincial government has helped resolve some of these challenges. “We have started to note improvements on the collaboration between the work of Community Development Workers, Traditional Leaders, Councillors and ward committees at a ward level,” said Mr Mabuza.

Challenges such as lack of financial viability and an inability to collect revenue are not unique to municipalities in Mpumalanga. Premier Mabuza says the situation in Mpumalanga is further exacerbated by the debts owed to them by other spheres of government. However, there has been a remarkable improvement since the provincial government introduced remedial measures to turn the situation around. “I am pleased to report that R367million in arrears owed by government departments to municipalities was settled by the end of January 2014. Equally we have directed all our municipalities to improve their billing system and their revenue collection efforts”, said Mr Mabuza.

Local government, as Premier Mabuza alluded to, is where most people have direct and frequent contact with govern-

ment and are frontline institutions that enable citizen interaction with government services. In consistent with this assertion, Mr Mabuza says the provincial government will continue to provide support to the municipalities. The support entails the following:

- Improve public trust in local government through active and deliberate citizen engagement.
- Appoint competent and committed staff and where necessary train and redeploy,
- Continue tackling corruption within local government,
- Continue to strengthen the work of the Institution of Traditional Leadership, especially its developmental role, as part of our governance system.

Municipalities play an important part in government’s efforts to improve service delivery. According to the 2011 Stats SA report, millions of people now have basic services like water; sanitation; refuse removal; electricity; housing; education; health care and other services and this is attributed in part, to the role of municipalities.

# Ehlanzeni District and Steve Tshwete Municipalities obtain clean audits



**SUCCESS STORY:** Premier David Mabuza congratulates Steve Tshwete Executive Mayor, Cllr Mike Masina and Municipal Manager, Mr Willie Fouche for obtaining a clean audit.

Ehlanzeni District and Steve Tshwete Municipalities have obtained clean audits from the Auditor-General (A-G) in the 2012/13 financial year. Steve Tshwete, with its seat in Middleburg, has achieved the feat for the fourth time while this is the third achievement for Ehlanzeni District. The two municipalities were awarded trophies at Ehlanzeni District Council Chamber during the Premier's Co-ordinating Forum (PCF) in recognition of their achievement.

Premier David Mabuza lauded the two municipalities for their achievement. Their achievements are as a result of the action plan put together by Mpumalanga in an endeavour to help all municipalities to improve in their audit outcomes. The plan is also in line with Mpumalanga's desire to support all municipalities to obtain clean audits in line with Operation Clean Audit 2014.

Although Ehlanzeni District and Steve Tshwete Municipalities are celebrating their achievements, however, some municipalities are still struggling to obtain clean audits. The audit process is carried out by the A-G, a Chapter 9 Institution, established in terms of the South African Constitution. The auditing process focuses on areas such as asset management, internal policies, reports, financial management, human resource management, performance management, with the view to restore public confidence.

Three municipalities obtained unqualified outcomes with findings while eleven of them obtained qualifications with findings. Five of them obtained disclaimers. In order to improve, the A-G has recommended that municipalities with no clean audits must pay attention to the following areas:

- Supply Chain Management
- Quality of performance reports
- Human Resource Management
- Quality of submitted financial statements
- Information Technology Internal controls
- Financial health.

Key positions such as those of Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) are vacant and this is cited amongst the contributing factors for poor audit outcomes. This was confirmed by Ms Sibongile Lubambo of the A-G in Mpumalanga. "Lack of consequences for poor performance and transgressions, slow response by management in addressing root causes for poor audit outcomes remain the key challenges," Lubambo pointed out. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Leaders (COGTA) and the Department of Finance in Mpumalanga have developed an action plan to address these challenges. The plan includes the deployment of experts to provide municipalities with the required support. Filling of critical vacancies and placing some of them under Administrators, form part of the plan. The Premier has warned that remedial action will be taken against municipalities which have failed to obtain clean audits.

Meanwhile, the Premier's office and the Provincial Department of Finance have obtained clean audits. Provincial Director-General, Dr Nonhlanhla Mkhize and MEC for Finance, Mr Madala Masuku were awarded trophies by the office of the A-G as an acknowledgement for their achievement.

# PREMIER DAVID MABUZA DECLARES HOUSE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS OPENED



**WORKING TOGETHER:** Premier Mabuza and MEC Skhosana meet Emakhosi in the legislature chamber after the opening of the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders.

Mpumalanga Premier, Mr David Mabuza opened the Mpumalanga House of Traditional Leaders with a commitment to strengthen the institution of traditional leaders. The annual function took place in the Provincial legislature and was attended by MECs, Traditional Leaders, Executive Mayors, Heads of Departments, Members of the Provincial Committee on Disputes and Resolutions and government officials.

Capacity building and institutional efficiency of traditional leaders is at the centre of the commitment. "We are strengthening the House of Traditional Leaders, making it to be the centre of development in all the areas of Traditional Leaders. We are appointing capable personnel to man the administrative affairs of the House of Traditional Leaders. For example, we have elevated the post of the Head of Administration in the House of Traditional Leaders to Chief Director. This post has been duly filled. Efforts to also enhance administrative support especially at local house level are underway," said Mabuza.

The Premier further announced government's decision to improve the conditions of headmen and headwomen as part of the commitment. "The Proclamation made by President Jacob Zuma on the determination of salaries and allowances of Traditional Leaders, Members of the House, both National and Provincial, we are pleased to announce that the salaries of Headmen and Headwomen will be increased from R2 000 per month to R6 740 per month with immediate effect," Mr Mabuza said emphatically.

Last year Mr Mabuza announced the construction of the palaces of King Makhosoke II and King Mabhoko III. This time, he told Emakhosi that the construction of the palaces is underway. He further told the house that the provincial government has taken one step further in the improvement of traditional councils. "We have also taken a decision not to renovate Traditional Council offices but rather to build new offices all together. In the 2014/15 financial year we will be building four (4) new Traditional Councils offices," he explained.

The Premier lauded traditional leaders for their co-operation with government's efforts to develop rural communities while at the same time, creating job opportunities. He cited the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme as a case in point. "Without doubt, through this programme, we have created 78 278 work opportunities for our people living in rural areas, particularly for the young people", he said.

Meanwhile, the department has signed a land mark Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with traditional leaders, municipalities and the South African Police Services (SAPS). The MOU seeks to ensure that the Traditional Council, after consultation with the Municipality, identifies and plan land use and land management schemes, to ensure that the department support the municipalities and traditional councils, to ensure that SAPS enforce law and order in areas of jurisdiction of traditional leaders and to ensure that SAPS assist with the process of combating unlawful land invasion. The MOU was signed by MEC Simon Skhosana, Kgoshi Mathibela Mokoena, Cllr Mafika Nkosi (of the Provincial South African Local Government Association, SALGA) and Lt General Thulani Ntobela of the SAPS.



**CONSENSUS:** MEC Skhosana, Kgoshi Mathibela Mokoena, Cllr Mafika Nkosi shake hands at the end of the signing agreement.

# COGTA IN ACTION



**AUDIT FINDINGS:** Premier David Mabuza congratulates municipalities and departments which obtained clean audits during a Primer's Co-ordinating Forum at Ehlanzeni District Council Chamber. (L-R): MEC for Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Ms Pinky Phosa, HOD for Finance, Ms Nombedesho Nkamba, Provincial D-G, Dr Nonhlanhla Mkhize, Ms Sibongile Lubalo of the Provincial A-G office and Ehlanzeni Executive Mayor, Cllr Lettie Shongwe.



**FOUNDATIONAL PHASE:** MEC Simon Skhosana motivates learners to take education serious at the Sizile Primary School on the first day of the school term in Delmas



**WATER RATIO:** HOD, Mr David Mahlobo briefs a meeting in the Bushbuckridge Council Chamber about water supply. Executive Mayor, Cllr Renius Khumalo (middle) and the Administrator, Mr Eric Ngomane pay attention to the briefing.



**INVESTIGATION:** MEC Skhosana determines the extent of the damage caused by heavy rains in one of the bridges in Nkomazi. Nkomazi Executive Mayor, Cllr Thulisile Khoza, COGTA's Mr Slykie Dhludhlu and Municipal Manager, Mr Dan Ngwenya provided support.



**HERITAGE:** Prince Dlamini of Embhuleni (third from left) takes lead in a cultural dance to mark the beginning of the annual cultural festival of Embhuleni in Badplaas.



**SALUTATION:** Members of the Ndebele nation's Ibutho make a guard of honour as a sign of respect for King Makhosoke II during the annual festival in Bronkhorspruit.

# COGTA IN ACTION



**CULTURAL FESTIVAL:** Ingwenyama Makhosoke II of the Ndebele nation welcomes MEC Skhosana and Provincial Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders, Kgoshi Mathibela Mokoena during the annual traditional festival in Bronkhorspruit.



**FACTUAL:** MEC Skhosana resolves a dispute over the control of the Siboshwa Traditional Council offices during a meeting with the community at Kamaqhekeza Hall. Cogta's Mr Lucky Zwane and Ms Lettie Sibiya and Cllr Million Shongwe record proceedings.



**AFTER-THOUGHT:** One of the community members suggests a way forward during the meeting at Kamaqhekeza.



**RAPID RESPONSE:** HOD Mr Mahlobo highlights areas of improvement for performance to officials of the department during a 9 months performance review at the Nutting House.



**COLLABORATION:** Members of the Provincial committee on disputes and resolution for Traditional Leadership share a lighter moment with Premier Mabuza, MEC Skhosana and HOD Mahlobo.



**MUTATIS – MUTANDIS:** COGTA's Ms Refilwe Jones gives a legal opinion on municipal by-laws during the annual municipal legal forum held in Ermelo. COGTA's Mr Lucky Zwane looks on.

# MEC SKHOSANA VISITS FLOOD HIT AREAS IN THE NKOMAZI MUNICIPALITY

The MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in Mpumalanga, Mr Simon Skhosana has visited floods hit areas in the Nkomazi Local Municipality to hand over food parcels and blankets. Mr Skhosana was accompanied by the Nkomazi Executive Mayor, Cllr Thulisile Khoza, local councillors, and senior COGTA officials. He visited Mekemeke village near Louville to hand over the amenities to thirty-eight (38) families. The intervention forms part of the government's relief effort for the affected families.

Mekemeke is one of the villages hit hard by the recent heavy rains in the Nkomazi Municipality. The roads were wet and slippery, making it hard to travel through. During the visit, Mr Skhosana said it is the responsibility of the government to intervene in the plight of the people. "We are here to send a message that as a government we care. We have committed ourselves to be with you even in this difficult period," he said.

A local resident, Mr Lot Mhlabane welcomed the government's relief effort. He further urged Mr Skhosana to help the community by improving living conditions. "We have no proper houses. The primary school here was closed and our kids were moved to a nearby village, without an explanation. We can appreciate it if Mr Skhosana can intervene," Mr Mhlabane urged. In reply, Mr Skhosana said the kids were relocated to a new school with the best resources. He further committed himself to co-ordinate efforts with sector departments responsible for housing and roads to address the request of the community.

The entourage visited the family of a flood victim, Faniki Mandlazi, who drowned in a local river at Jeppes Reef. During the visit, Mr Skhosana expressed condolences to the bereaved family, in which he said: "It is our responsibility as government to give people hope in all circumstances".

Mr Skhosana also visited several bridges at Mzinti, Tonga and Mlumati to determine the extent of the damage. He appealed to road users to use alternative roads in areas where bridges were damaged and sub-merged under water. "The department is co-ordinating the

reconstruction of the damaged bridges. We have discussed the matter with sector departments for the reconstruction of the bridges as a matter of urgency. In the meantime, we urge our people not to risk their lives by crossing them until it is safe to do so," Mr Skhosana said.



**RELIEF EFFORTS:** MEC Skhosana hands over blankets to Mr Lot Mhlabane of Mekemeke as part of relief efforts. Nkomazi Executive Mayor, Cllr Thulisile Khoza.



**RISK AREA:** The Tonga bridge was sub-merged under water due to the heavy rains.

# MINISTER NKWINTI DISCUSSES RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND REFORM WITH TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN MPUMALANGA



**COLLABORATION:** Minister of Rural Development, Mr Gugile Nkwinti addressed Emakhosi about the government's land redistribution programme and rural development plans in a meeting in Nelspruit.

Rural development and land reform in Mpumalanga became the focal point of a meeting between Minister Gugile Nkwinti of Rural development and Land Reform and traditional leaders. The meeting was attended by the Executive Members of the House of Traditional Leaders in Mpumalanga, Senior traditional leaders, Headmen, officials in the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Leaders (Cogta) and senior officials of the provincial rural development and land reform office.

During the meeting Minister Nkwinti warned against land invasion. "Residents who have been given land should not allow individuals to reside in it without proof allocated by the government. People should report such cases. Failing which, they will be held accountable. We live in a constitutional country and therefore people must account for using the resources," Mr Nkwinti warned.

The number of malls built in the urban areas is increasing. The construction of these malls contribute to the creation of

job opportunities. Traditional leaders are working hard to attract land developers in rural communities. Chairperson of the Mpumalanga House of Traditional Leaders, Kgoshi Mathibela Mokoena told Minister Nkwinti that traditional leaders have committed themselves to work in partnership with the government and private land developers as part of an effort to develop rural areas. "Amakhosi wants to help government with the development including infrastructure, economy and changing the lives of people in our communities. "In order for the development to go ahead successfully, Emakhosi requested the developers to build malls and shopping centers in their communities," Kgoshi Mokoena said.

Non-utilization of land was highlighted as one of the major challenges facing land ownership in the country, according to Minister Nkwinti. He says failure to use it may cause risks. "We want people to discuss how they are going to use the land. Otherwise others will invade the land easily," Minister Nkwinti said.

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## DISASTER TOLL FREE

080 020 2507

## Disaster Management Centres

Disaster Management Centre	Contact Details
Provincial Disaster Management Centre	0800 202 507
<b>Ehlanzeni District</b>	
Ehlanzeni Disaster Management Centre	013 762 4000
Mbombela Disaster Management Centre	013 759 9141/ 013 753 3331
Umjindi Disaster Management Centre	013 712 2222
Thaba Chweu Disaster Management Centre	013 235 7304
Bushbuckridge Disaster Management Centre	013 797 1367
Nkomazi Disaster Management Centre	082 806 1611
<b>Gert Sibande District</b>	
Gert sibande Disaster Management Centre	017 801 7000
Govan Mbeki Disaster Management Centre	017 620 6143
Lekwa Disaster Management Centre	017 712 9661
Musukaligwa Disaster Management Centre	017 801 3412
Pixley ka Isaka Seme Disaster Management Centre	017 734 6100
Chief Albert Luthuli Disaster Management Centre	017 843 4011
Dipaliseng Disaster Management Centre	017 773 0055
Mkhondo Disaster Management Centre	017 826 2211
<b>Nkangala District</b>	
Nkangala Disaster Management Centre	013 249 2024/ 013 249 2004
Dr JS Moroka Disaster Management Centre	013 973 1101
Victor Khanye Disaster Management Centre	013 665 6005/ 013 665 2913
Steve Tshwete Disaster Management Centre	013 249 7000/ 013 249 7263
Emakhazeni Disaster Management Centre	013 253 1121/ 013 253 7628
Thembisile Hani Disaster Management Centre	013 986 9100/ 013 986 9115
Emalahleni Disaster Management Centre	013 690 6911/ 013 690 6208

## NEW APPOINTMENTS



**Mr Benny Mahlangu**  
Municipal Manager:  
Dr J.S Moroka  
Local Municipality



**Ms Margaret Skhosana**  
Municipal Manager:  
Nkangala District  
Municipality



**Adv. Simon Mahlangu**  
Chairperson: Provincial Committee  
on Disputes and Resolutions  
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