

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR MEC FOR COGTA, HON. R.M
MTSHWENI DURING A STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT DAY
WITH CDWs AND WARD COMMITTEES AS PART OF THE
CABINET OUTREACH PROGRAMME IN DOORNKOP, STEVE
TSHWETE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY – 16 SEPTEMBER 2014**

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR,
CHAIRPERSON OF WARD 29 COMMITTEE
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT, MR CHUNDA
SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CO-OPERATIVE
GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS
SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE STEVE TSHWETE LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKERS
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

STATE OF WARD 29 (DOORNKOP)

- 1 Programme Director, the Cabinet Outreach Programme has given us, as the Provincial Government a rare opportunity to visit Ward 29 in Doornkop and appreciate the challenges you are facing as members of the community and in your functions as Community Development Workers and as a Ward Committees.
- 2 This ward is not immune to service delivery challenges as is the case with similar settlements. I have visited this area before and have first hand experience about lack of water, proper road, sanitation, etc.
- 3 Our team of officials has been working on the ground, with the assistance of CDWs and the Ward Committee to identify and compile a profile of households with an urgent need for intervention. Your co-operation in this regard has made our job easier. We may not be in a position to address the challenges we have identified in the households today or all at once, but at least we now have a sense of what is happening on the ground.

- 4 Apart from the service delivery, we have identified a number of service delivery challenges.
- **About 5000 families are living here illegally,**
 - **Delivery of services is a challenge by the municipality, since this is a private land,**
 - **Electricity remains a challenge after an unsuccessful attempt by ESKOM to install power lines.**
 - **Uncontrolled influx of illegal occupants of land.**

SUPPORT FOR CDWs AND WARD COMMITTEES

- 5 Programme Director, Community Development Workers (CDW) are a vital cog between the government and the community. Your role in the community is crucial. You are the first port of call whenever our communities have issues to raise with the government.
- 6 Over the years, the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs has worked hard to ensure that you are provided with the tools of trade. These include cell phones so that you can contact us about issues of concern by the communities. We appreciate those who do their work with diligence all the times. We are proud of you.
- 7 Some of you are representing us very well. ***One CDW in White River, saved a life of a baby, who was found dumped, wrapped in a plastic. Apparently the mother gave birth to her and deserted the baby. The CDW picked up the baby and reported the matter to a local hospital. The baby was rushed to the hospital and was given medical attention. Once she was stabilized, the CDW assisted the hospital nurse to trace the relatives of the baby. Since then, the baby is in the care of the grand parents and is growing very well. That is the kind of CDWs we want you to be.***
- 8 Recently, we purchased you laptops and provided you with 3-Gs to make your job even more easier. This support was done as per the directive of the Premier DD Mabuza, in recognition of the work you have to do. At the same time, we developed a template for reporting and we have offered you training.

- 9 My concern though is that some of you have lost your laptops. Some are not using these gadgets for what they are meant for. You are loading music and you do not send us reports timeously. We need to correct that. The communities have expectations from you and if you do not meet those expectations, they accuse the government of failing to address their needs and resort to the streets to embark on protests.
- 10 Ward Committees have a crucial role to play in bridging the communication gap between the Community and the government. It is the responsibility of the Ward Committee to ensure that communities are aware of development matters in Ward 29 and all other wards in the municipality.
- 11 Our assessments of the service delivery protests especially here in our province indicate that some of the Ward Committees are ineffective in organizing ward meetings and brief the local communities about development issues. Even when there are challenges, the community should be informed.
- 12 There are issues around the development of ward-based plans. I will appreciate it if you can take us through. Government is firming up communication with the communities and central to this, is Ward Councillors and Ward Committees. You have the advantage of the proximity to the communities.
- 13 During the State of the Province Address in in June this year, Premier Mabuza made a call to the Executive Mayors and Councillors to have regular meetings where they share information about service delivery issues. Central to these meetings is the role which Ward Committees play, in ensuring that they mobilize communities to attend and keep records of what was discussed, including an attendance register.

14 Programme Director, our CDWs and the Ward Committees are the eyes and ears of government. You are a Rapid Response system for government. We rely on you for maintaining a good contact with the communities. I would like to hear from you about the challenges you are facing. I know that the temptation is always there to use this platform as a complaints forum. Let us avoid that at all costs.

15 At best, use this opportunity to raise the matters for discussion and come up with innovations as well. I think you have heard this saying several times: ***'Don't be part of the problem, but be part of the solution'***. The team I am travelling with includes the Head of Department, Mr Cain Chunda, Mr John Mogane, who works with you closely, and of course officials from the department. We will deal together with the inputs to be shared here.

I thank you.