



DPWI Brings Hope and Dignity to the Community of Umzinyathi

Article by Andile Xulu and pictures by Maanea Maselesele

Bridges serve as essential lifelines for communities, providing safe and convenient access to crucial services such as schools, healthcare, and employment opportunities.

On November 6, 2024, the community of Umzinyathi celebrated the official handover of three Welisizwe rural bridges at Inanda, KwaZulu-Natal. Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Dean Macpherson led the ceremony, accompanied by Deputy Minister Sihle Zikalala, KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Public Works and Infrastructure Martin Meyer, Inkosi for Umzinyathi Community Mqoqi Ngcobo, and DDG for Project Management Office Luyanda Kafilé.

The Welisizwe Rural Bridge Programme, an initiative of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI), aims to construct 96 rural bridges annually to improve connectivity for South Africa's remote areas. Collaborating with the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), the DPWI works to bridge gaps for essential services, uplifting rural communities.

Umzinyathi resident Spheisihle Ngcobo shared heartfelt gratitude, recounting a recent tragedy where a child drowned due to the absence of a bridge. "We are really grateful to the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure for paving the way for us. We really hope more job opportunities will be created," he said.

In his address, Minister Macpherson emphasized the impact of the Welisizwe Rural Bridge Programme as a means to improve the lives of communities like Umzinyathi, offering hope and a renewed sense of dignity.

