

CONSTRUCTION – 2

Nxesi says women in construction sector need more support

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PUBLIC Works Minister **Thulas Nxesi** has urged big contractors to support women in the construction industry through subcontracting work.

Addressing women in the construction industry at a Construction Industry Development Board- (CIDB-) sponsored event, in Pretoria, he said it remained a moral imperative for bigger contractors – even big women-owned contractors – to assist smaller contractors.

“It is also now a legal necessity [for] big contracts to subcontract to the designated groups – those who have been disadvantaged, including women,” he noted.

He stressed that women contractors needed to ensure that they were registered with the CIDB, as well as the Central Supplier Database of the National Treasury, and have their tax matters in order with the South African Revenue

Service. “If all of this is in order, then they are eligible to tender,” he said.

He also noted that the department was adopting an initiative to review its current procurement plan to designate tenders for women.

“This is in keeping with our target of awarding 75% of all of our tenders to the designated groups.”

The department is also adopting a sector approach to implementing initiatives to empower women in construction, and has an obligation to translate the legislation into procurement policies that consciously support women-owned contractors, he said.

Nxesi highlighted that the department was guided by the CIDB, which had developed standards to support procurement in terms of building development goals into contracts.

“From the legal and policy framework that we have put in place, it is clearly in the interests of big service providers to government to take procurement decisions aimed at growing and

sustaining women contractors through subcontracting opportunities,” he said.

This includes ensuring skills development to further professionalise women contractors to deliver high-quality work, on time and within budget. He stressed that women contractors – like their male counterparts – had to be competitive and embrace excellence in their work.

“Again, as the client, government is looking for work that meets the specs, is within budget and is delivered on time.

“The big contractors, who have a major role to play in developing women and other designated groups, will have the same requirements.”

He pointed out that the department had taken a firm stance on poor-performing contractors that tarnished the image of the industry and had established a restriction committee that would restrict service providers from doing business with government if they breached contract conditions or were involved in any fraudulent or corrupt acts.

“This is in line with the stance of President **Cyril Ramaphosa** in seeking to root out fraud and corruption.

“It will also contribute to ensuring ethical standards are maintained in the sector – which must be good for the construction industry, in general,” he said. 