

# The Citizen

## Eastern Cape to build nine bridges in rural areas

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**The bridges will reconnect communities, bring significant social and economic benefits and stop incidents of drowning and near drownings.**

Some Eastern Cape rural communities are set to benefit from the nine bridges that are to be constructed across the province between now and end of March next year.

This is a joint partnership between the Eastern Cape Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison, the national department of Public Works and that of Defence and Military Veterans.

Eastern Cape transport department spokesperson, Unathi Bhinqose, said some of these communities have somewhat been cut off from economic and other opportunities, and now they are set to benefit from the construction of the bridges.

“This initiative will see engineers from the department and their counterparts in defence and public works putting together their skills and expertise for the benefit of poor and disadvantaged communities,” said Bhinqose.

Bhinqose said some rural communities have called for their villages to be reconnected through bridges after some incidents of drownings and near drownings and children missing out on school after heavy rains.

He said this intergovernmental partnership has a proven track record since it started nearly a decade ago, reconnecting rural communities that were previously cut off through these easy to construct and durable Bailey Type Bridges.

According to Bhinqose, this initiative is set to change the prospects of these communities significantly.

“These bridges will not only make their lives a lot better but will also bring significant social and economic benefits to these rural communities and act as a catalyst for local and regional development,” he said.

He added that the necessary arrangements between all the relevant stakeholders including the communities to benefit from this have been completed and construction is set to commence soon.

– African News Agency (ANA)

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