

Women must be bold – MEC

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THE NORTHERN Cape Department of Public Works has vowed to continue to fight the triple challenges faced by women of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The MEC for Public Works, Abraham Vosloo, during a departmental Women's Day event, praised women for their courage in fighting for equal rights and urged them to continue to take the reins in fighting for their rights.

“We want to encourage boldness in women. This is one important characteristic which women need to portray in the workplace, not allowing them to be intimidated by the presence and loud voices of men in boardrooms and on construction sites. In a department that is male, I would like to encourage women to continue to

share their gains, the gaps and their current struggles.”

Vosloo also called on men to assist in the eradication of women abuse.

“This government condemns all forms of gender-based violence and calls on all men to respect women's inherent dignity. Various forms of abuse like economic abuse, ‘blesser syndrome’, illegal labour practices, emotional abuse, and physical abuse continue at alarming levels. The struggle continues as we strive to eradicate the oppression and silencing of differently-abled women in society, the rape of elderly women, the physical and emotional abuse of women and the human trafficking of women to become sex slaves. Let us continue to speak up and speak out against these social ills.”

He added that the department

was committed to employing women in its programmes as a way of empowering women and addressing inequality in the workplace.

“The department needs to fast-track the appointment of women in management positions, the capacitation of women contractors and having exit strategies in place for women in EPWP projects.

“We need to upscale our efforts in targeting the girl child in terms of drawing them into the field of engineering through bursaries and our youth development initiatives.

“Women need to take advantage of the many entrepreneurial opportunities that are available and start their own businesses. We must work to remove the barriers which prevent women from entering and thriving in the labour market,” said Vosloo.