

## **Kamoso Awards Ceremony**

**Emalahleni, Mpumalanga**

**Venue: The Ridge Hotel, Witbank**

**18h00 4 November 2011,**

### **CHECK PROTOCOL**

- ❖ **Programme Director**
- ❖ **MEC of Public Works, Roads and Transport in Mpumalanga**
- ❖ **MECs present today**
- ❖ **Executive Mayors**
- ❖ **Councillors**
- ❖ **Heads of departments**
- ❖ **Municipal managers**
- ❖ **CEOs and representatives from supporting entities**
- ❖ **Senior staff in all spheres of government**
- ❖ **Members of the media**
- ❖ **Ladies and gentlemen**
- ❖ **And most important of all our Award winners**

Good evening.

First let me say a word of thanks to the organisers of this prestigious event. I really appreciate this opportunity to visit your province and to meet with people from public works, from all the spheres of government and the EPWP Implementers. Let me extend my sincere gratitude to the honourable MEC of Public Works, Roads and Transport in the province, Ms Dikeledi Mahlangu, for hosting us.

Let me also take this opportunity and congratulate the Mpumalanga provincial Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport for being one of the first provinces in the country to introduce the Kamoso awards as a strategy to mobilize all the potential role players and to recognise the existing role players of the EPWP.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank our adjudicators from the National Department Public Works, Provincial Public Works, Roads and Transport, Mpumalanga Tourism Parks Agency, Construction Industry Development Board, Independent Development Trust who worked tirelessly and made it possible for us to award the best performers in the province in the implementation of this noble cause of job creation and poverty alleviation.

Most important of all, congratulations to all the winners of the Kamoso Awards 2011. You really did us proud and we are extremely delighted with your achievements. To all the finalists: you played your part in the implementation of this wonderful programme and you deserve a round of applause for your unwavering commitment and support for the programme.

I was appointed Minister of Public Works just over a week ago, and this is my first visit as such to one of the provinces. I am happy to be in Mpumalanga and to share some ideas with you this evening – as well as to celebrate excellence in relation to the Extended Public Works Programme.

I am just coming from the EPWP Summit in Midrand. It was a pleasure to participate in such a large, very well-organised and highly productive event comprising over 800 delegates who had come from all over South Africa to review the Expanded Public Works Programme with a view to strengthening the programme and enhancing service delivery.

May be it would be good to just share with you some of the important resolutions which were adopted today by the EPWP Summit:

- ❑ The Summit resolved that all outstanding protocols should be signed by 31 March 2012. I would urge any municipalities here who have not signed up to indicate their commitment to EPWP, to do it as soon as possible.
  
- ❑ The Summit resolved that municipalities will ensure that their Integrated Development Plans (IDP) prioritise the EPWP approach and methodology in their projects in order to optimise the creation of work opportunities. I cannot emphasise this enough: EPWP calls for a radical change in mind-set in favour of labour based methodologies.
  
- ❑ Summit further resolved that municipalities will optimize their budgets to deliver on the EPWP across all sectors, and will use labour intensive methods in the delivery of projects in order to promote the creation of work opportunities. Our studies have shown that – for many projects - you can achieve the same results – to the same quality – using human labour – rather than capital-intensive technologies.

- ❑ From the side of the Department of Public Works, the Summit said we should provide intensified, focused Technical Support across all EPWP sectors to optimize the implementation of EPWP. As I understand it, this means support right from the design stage, through implementation and to assist with reporting – until all municipalities are up to speed on these processes.
  
- ❑ The Summit supported the review of the integrated incentive models. This is clear: we don't want to put roadblocks and speed-humps in the way of job creation.
  
- ❑ The Summit also resolved that there needs to be strengthened relationships between NPOs and municipalities to enhance implementation of the Non-State Sector.
  
- ❑ Municipalities undertook to intensify reporting on work opportunities created on projects implemented. This is important colleagues because it makes us accountable, it helps us to monitor and evaluate what is going on – and ultimately to improve delivery. If there are problems with capacity, please colleagues, let the Department know, so that we can help you to make a plan.
  
- ❑ At a very practical level, the National DPW will continue to develop and make available implementation manuals on EPWP.

Our task now then, colleagues, is to implement the commitments made at the Summit. I am appealing to all of you, and particularly to municipal managers and mayors to drive this thing. Our experience is that where you have political buy-in, the projects proceed smoothly.

Colleagues, this is the ultimate win-win situation. You are empowered to deliver services such as roads, ECD centres, schools etc – to your people, and in the process you also create work opportunities and incomes for unemployed families. And when you do this well, you will receive further incentives.

I want to pause here for a moment, and talk briefly on serious matters:

It is no secret that this has been a very bad year for the Department of Public Works. The Department has attracted negative publicity from the media, following various investigations and negative findings by the Public Protector, the SIU and the Auditor General.

As a Department we have to take these findings very seriously, and we have to put in place the mechanisms and processes to address the short-comings. I believe that we have started that process. This week the top management of the Department were in Cape Town to meet with the Portfolio Committee in Parliament – exactly for this purpose to explain in detail the remedial measures to be put in place to address the issues raised in the Public Protector's Report.

In preparing to meet with the Portfolio Committee, I said that the important thing now was to be open and honest with the Committee – because in honestly admitting and identifying the problems – this is the first step towards implementing solutions. That is where we are now.

Naturally the media has been asking the new Minister for Public Works: what is your plan for the Department? How are you going to tackle the problems of the Department? I have been somewhat guarded in my response:

- I am aware of the many challenges that Public Works has – but I am not about to be led by the media in formulating responses and strategies.
- I have said that currently I am engaged on a listening campaign. The most important thing I can do at the moment is consult, read and make my own investigations – to begin to identify the issues and priorities.
- And it cannot be the case that every time there is a new Minister we restart at ground zero. That would be very disruptive. Where there is good work being done we have to support that. Where we identify gaps, then these have to be addressed. We have to develop specific solutions to specific problems.
- But of course I cannot do this on my own. It is vitally important that as a Department we embark – together – on a process where we collectively identify problems and develop solutions: where we seek quick wins, whilst embarking on a longer term process of organisational renewal.

Let me also sound a serious note of warning in respect to the Expanded Public Works Programme. There is a very distinct possibility this year that we will underspend on this programme. Think for a moment what that means:

- This is the flagship programme of the Department.
- It is also the flagship programme of the government's commitment to job creation.

- Think of all the unemployed people – young people, rural people, those from the most disadvantaged communities – all those people who won't have work opportunities and the remuneration that comes with that - all because we didn't spend the funds to create those jobs. That would be criminal.

We have to seriously address these questions and ask:

- How do we radically expand the scope and content of the Expanded Public Works Programme?
- We have to be very creative here. I am not talking about creating jobs as an end in itself – where only the affected individuals benefit. We are talking here about creating employment opportunities as part of a broader strategy to develop communities as a whole.
- In rural development we talk about building vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities. How does EPWP fit into that vision for example.
- In turn we have to ask: how do we build our own capacity - as a Department, and in partnership with provinces and municipalities – to create work opportunities and to monitor, manage and report on such projects. In this connection we have said that it may be necessary to review the present incentives grant model to encourage greater take up by municipalities.

Moving on. Let us remember the reason why we are gathered here tonight – to celebrate the successes and individual efforts of EPWP Implementers.

I need to say a few words about the Awards.

The Kamoso Awards were first held in February 2007 as a platform to recognise municipalities, provinces, departments, public entities and individuals who excelled in implementing the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the preceding year.

The Kamoso Awards recognises the EPWP as a key Government Programme aimed at improving the general socio-economic conditions of all South Africans.

The objectives of the awards include the following:

- To acknowledge implementing bodies that have performed well in terms of the objectives of the EPWP;
- To mobilise government stakeholders and partners to increase their efforts around the implementation of the EPWP;
- To communicate and showcase progress, impact and successes of the EPWP nationally as a key government programme;
- To use the awards event as a platform to enhance the visibility of the EPWP and reinforce its objectives to the broader public;
- To promote the creation of labour intensive work opportunities;
- To acknowledge implementing bodies that have performed well; and



- To mobilise Non Profit Organizations to participate in EPWP.

The Kamoso Awards recognise excellence in the implementation of projects from all four EPWP sectors, namely:

- Infrastructure – which focuses on increasing the labour-intensity of government-funded infrastructure projects as well as providing training and skills development to locally employed workers, and building cost-effective quality assets;
- Social – this involves creating work opportunities in public social programmes such as community-based health care and Early Childhood Development. As a former teacher, I have to emphasise this one. All the international research indicates that good ECD provides a sound basis for subsequent success and optimum throughput rates in the schooling system. So not only do we provide work opportunities, we also directly impact on the quality of education provision in the country. In every sense – a win-win situation.
- Environment and culture – creating work opportunities in public environment programmes such as the Working for Water Programme.
- Non-state Sector – working with NGOs, CBOs and FBOs on job creation. This includes the Community Works Programme implemented by Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

The last Kamoso Awards was held in February 2011, which rewarded performance in 2009/10. At the end of 2009/10, the programme created 625,000 work opportunities (exceeding its 2009/10 target of 550,000 work opportunities), with 11,832 projects

reported and 8 National Departments, 127 Provincial Departments and 125 Municipalities reporting. The February 2011 Awards were of particular significance for it represented the achievement of 1 million work opportunities since the start of EPWP Phase II, in April 2009. In February 2010, the number of categories was 27.

Now a word to the Award winners.

Each of you is being recognised for excellence in relation to your EPWP project. You are being acknowledged for your hard work, your commitment and your creativity. Without you there would be no EPWP – and thousands of people would be the poorer for it. You make a difference.

I applaud you.