

Minister of Public Works
Ms S Sigcau
12 April 2003

[Back](#)

Handover of the KwaHlabisa schools

Master of ceremonies
Honorable Premier Mr. LPH Mtshali
Reverend CJ Mtetwa, MEC for public works
Councilor L.M Mthombeni
Members of the school committees of Hlabisa and Mbopha
Distinguished guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Sanibonani muzi waKwaHlabisa

As we draw to the close of the first decade of our freedom, we can confidently say that the sacrifices of our people for freedom were not in vein. April 27 1994 heralded the dawn of a new era to the people of South Africa. It also opened new avenues to the peoples of Africa and the world. That historic day affirmed the injunction of the Freedom Charter that, " The people shall govern". Henceforth no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people.

Two days ago marked the 10th anniversary of the assassination of Chris Hani a gallant fighter for freedom. During the darkest days of apartheid repression, Chris' courage epitomized the resilience of our people for freedom. As we celebrate the fruits of our freedom we dare not forget our painful past.

Underdevelopment and poverty at Kwahlabisa bear testimony to the consequences of apartheid colonialism. Under the apartheid regime our people were denied basic necessities of life. As the people of KwaHlabisa would attest systematic violence became a norm of life during the 1980s.

Addressing the nation on February 9 2001 President Mbeki characterized legacy of apartheid thus, " it is a past of endemic and widespread poverty and gross imbalances in levels of development and the distribution of wealth, income and opportunity. It is a past of an economy that was immersed in a crisis that was destined to worsen, It is away from this painful past that our country is progressing and must progress".

In the context of moving away from the painful past of apartheid, President Mbeki's government crafted the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme and the Urban Renewal Programme. Both programmes seek to extricate our people from the poverty trap.

The determination of the government to roll back the frontiers of poverty is illustrated in the formation of nodal points of development. Essentially nodal points provide an opportunity to deliver a basket of services on an integrated basis.

The ISRDP envisages radical transformation of rural economies, moving away from subsistence modes of economic activity to productive and sustainable growth. It is premised on the close and ongoing interaction of all three spheres of government in pursuit of the objective of sustainable rural development and economic regeneration. The programmes and budgets of all departments have to be targeted systematically at specific nodes.

KwaHlabisa has been identified as a poverty pocket and is situated within Umkhanyakude ISRDS node. The area is characterized by poor socio-economic conditions such as high unemployment rate and poor resources. Recently Hlabisa has been rated as one of the areas that are highly affected by HIV/AIDS. The establishment of a Medical Research Center in the area is a critical contribution in the comprehensive strategy against HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Today's handover of KwaHlabisa schools represent another milestone towards a better life for all. Since the advent of democracy millions of our people have access to clean drinking water, housing, health ,education, social grants and other social services . Evidently the tide has turned regarding the delivery of basic services to our people. To sustain momentum of delivery the spirit of Vukuzenzele must grip our people.

The investments of the department of public works at the two schools built new classrooms and effected

renovations to the existing classrooms. The following reflects the scope of work that was undertaken in each of the schools using the budget that was allocated per school:

Mbopha High School- R 3 699 999.00

- Renovation of fifteen existing classrooms;
- Renovation and alteration of administration block;
- Construction of new hall with change rooms and tuck-shop;
- Construction of one new classroom and girls and boys toilets;
- Renovation of existing library and laboratory

Hlabisa Junior Primary School- R 2 300 000.00

- Renovation of 5 classrooms and First Aid room;
- Construction of 8 additional face brick classrooms;
- New principal's office;
- Library;
- Eight toilets;
- Installation of new ceilings in all the classrooms;
- Fencing and installation of security gate;
- Fencing and leveling of sports field

The projects achieved the following social impact:

Labor-based methods of construction generated 880 temporal jobs. Beneficiaries included 42% women, and 31% of youth that were involved in construction. Furthermore multiplier effect of the investments benefit the local economy. Some members of the community have acquired a number of building related skills. Out of this process members of the community generated income whilst involved in the project.

Over and above the construction and renovation of the structures, institutional and technical training was provided to the steering committees and the laborers. On site training was also done during construction. Training capacitated and provided skills that the community could utilize to access job opportunities locally and in the neighboring towns.

Already the community is reaping success of the projects. The registration at Mbopha High School for this year is 1041, which is more than last year. The programme management team has assisted Mbopha High School to get a donation of 22 computers through the Universal Service Agency. Computer lessons will start from grade 8 to 9.

The primary school has a registration of 469 learners for this year accommodated in 13 classrooms. Grade R has 43 learners and parents currently pay the educators. What the parents are doing is volunteerism in the spirit of vukuzenzele and government applauds it.

The hall that has been constructed at Mbopha High School has assisted the school to hold the final exams for the grade 12 classes in an open area that is conducive to writing examinations without disturbance. Supervision is also made easy by the open spaces afforded by the size of the hall. The new hall is also going to cater for-door games and other school related activities for the local schools as well. The library that was constructed at Hlabisa Junior Primary School has been identified as the central library for the local schools.

In conclusion allow me to congratulate all stakeholders who contributed in the success of this project. Evidently united in action for change we can push back the frontiers of poverty. As government our appeal to communities is to ensure that public property is not vandalized. Our future is in our hands.

[top](#)