

**Minister of Public Works
Ms Stella Sigcau
16 April 2000**

[Back](#)

Address at the official hand over of the Umbumbulu CBPWP Projects In KwaZulu-Natal

The Premier of Kwazulu-Natal, Mr Lionel Mtshali
The MEC for Public Works, KwaZulu Natal, Reverend CJ Mtetwa
The Chairperson of the Ilembe Regional Council, Mr SE Mfayela
The Amakhosi - Inkosi LZ Mkhize of Simahla, Inkosi BA Makhaya of Sobonakhona
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is always with a great sense of pride that I stand in front of communities such as yours, who, despite the odds, are determined to bring success and development to their areas.

I have spent the larger part of my life working with rural communities, helping to look for and finding solutions to some of the problems that lock communities in perpetual poverty and deprive them of decent livelihoods.

As government, we are encouraged to offer help where there is visible determination for self-improvement. Our government's participation should strengthen the efforts already in place to change the quality of life. Government thus becomes a partner in your development, and contributes to the creation of an environment conducive to growth and socio-economic upliftment.

Our history over decades of apartheid rule has put many of our communities in a state of poverty, hopelessness and incapacity. We may not be able to change the past, but together we can cooperate to change the present and lay solid foundations for a prosperous future.

Allow me to spare a word of recognition for the Ilembe Regional Council. I was informed that your area is one of the most cooperative where social facilitation is progressing very well. There is apparently a good working relationship between the Provincial Social Facilitation Coordinator, the Regional Council Coordinator and all the Cluster facilitators.

The ability to cooperate between all the relevant structures will catapult our work into unheard of success stories. Hence our call on you today is "TOGETHER WE FIGHT POVERTY". And hopefully we shall beat poverty.

It was with this attitude of cooperation that in 1994\95, the government started the programme known as the Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP), to reduce the levels of unemployment and alleviate the extent of poverty among our rural people.

The objectives of the Community Based Public Works Programme are to:

- Create opportunities for jobs
- Build community assets that will change the quality of our life
- Help train and empower local people to build, operate, manage and maintain these assets
- Empower communities and encourage them to work together in identifying projects necessary to make a difference in the area.

The CBPWP is a direct response to the problem of poverty, particularly in the rural areas. Poverty, among other things, is borne by a lack of income, a lack of access to institutions that offer social and economic services. In South Africa, poverty has been one of the direct results of the botched attempts at social engineering, where social experiments were forced on people and communities, often not without resistance. Today the country is reaping the bitter and unpalatable fruits of human error and vicious ideologies.

In a survey conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council in November 1999, forty one percent (41%) of South Africans considered job creation the most important national priority for the next 10 years. This was followed by the need to address crime at 31%. The third spot went to the provision of services. Interestingly, in a similar survey carried out in December 1998, crime and crime prevention were considered the most important priority by all South Africans, followed by job creation.

As the level of crime subsides and forces of darkness are brought to light and openly dealt with by our criminal and justice systems, people wish to get on with their lives and provide for themselves and their families.

KwaZulu-Natal has the highest proportion of respondents who identified job creation as the top priority (56%), followed by the Eastern Cape (45%). Also of concern is the fact that many of the respondents were youths. The above figures vindicate the objectives of the CBPWP and give encouragement to policy-makers and community builders alike in the affected areas.

Since 1997, almost R1, 1 billion has been invested in the CBPWP projects, mainly in the three provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Northern Province.

In 1998\99 out of a CBPWP budget of R274 million, more than R90 million was invested in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, including the R5,1 million used to build the nine community projects which form the Umbumbulu cluster. The Umbumbulu cluster is one of the four beneficiaries in the Ilembe District Council. The other three are Mapumulo, Lower Tugela and Ndwendwe. About R18 million in total was allocated to the Ilembe District Council in 1998\99.

Following the provision of basic infrastructure through this allocation, the socio-economic status of the area should improve greatly. Local women and youth, in particular those who participated in the projects, have already benefited to a great extent.

The Umbumbulu Cluster consists of the following projects that have all added value to the Umbumbulu area and provide in some of the infrastructural needs of the communities:

- Upgrading of the Ndaya Community Garden
- Ndaya Poultry House
- Ndaya Water Project
- Ndaya Market Stalls
- Esizibeni Comprehensive Technical High School
- Madundube Water Project
- Madundube Multi Functional Centre
- Madundube Sports Field
- Khulabebuka Senior Secondary School.

These projects are alleviating poverty by creating productive jobs and commercial opportunities for small entrepreneurs. It is achieved by using labour intensive construction methods in the creation, rehabilitation and maintenance of physical assets, employing and training local labour.

On this cluster, 273 people have found employment, of whom 118 are women and 67 youth.

The community has been actively involved in the selection and implementation of this project cluster. I have been told that you are also ready to be trained to manage this cluster after today's official hand over. The Regional Council has appointed a trainer to do Operation Maintenance Management System (OMM&S) training. And after the social facilitation, I am sure the community's capacity has been sufficiently enriched to enable them to take over the task of managing the cluster.

The importance of Community Based Public Works Programme is echoed in the grateful words of local residents such as uMama Olga Bafunani Hlongwa who said:

"This area has experienced poverty, but with the coming of these projects, the lives of the people have changed. We are now able to buy food, send our kids to school or take them to the clinic".

Mrs Hlongwa knows better. At the age of 52, she has 7 children, three of whom are of school-going age. For her, ever since the coming of the projects, the area has become "a small Durban". This is the transformation that the CBPWP seeks to bring to the lives of the 30 000 residents of KwaNdaya and Madundube in the Umbumbulu district.

The Government is currently targeting a great deal of energy and coordination into integrated rural development. We are of the opinion that rural areas should become more attractive, not only aesthetically, but

also as viable micro economies, to attract and keep able-bodied young people in the area with their families.

I am sure that you will agree with me that it is important for us, as communities, to share goals and objectives on our collective lives, to build a strong social cohesion and feel that we belong within our community. Working together on our development projects provide such an avenue for joint achievement, and I am convinced that here, today, we actually see the result of a community working together.

The projects constructed in this cluster are impressive. They should stimulate the tourism activity in the area. The location of the projects has also made it possible for different neighbouring communities to benefit as well. I trust that the targeted, poor communities, will continue to reap the benefit of this economic injection to the area, and that further socio-economic upliftment will take off.

[top](#)