

**Minister of Public Works
Ms S Sigcau
18 March 2002**

[Back](#)

Launch of the Marelane Kopman MPCC in Comfimvaba

Master of Ceremonies
Premier of the Eastern Cape, Rev M Stofile
MEC for Public Works in the Eastern Cape, Mr P Masualle
His Worship, Mayor of Chris Hani Municipality, Cllr S Sigabi
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

Aah! Daliwonga, Aah! Ngangomhlaba.
Molweni Mzi WaseBathenjini.

In exactly two days from today, South Africans will celebrate the 8th year of Human Rights Day as a free people.

Accordingly, government is taking stock of the advancement of Human Rights.

Fundamental Human Rights underpinned our struggle for freedom. The Bill of Rights as our constitution affirms, " Is a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. It enshrines the rights of all people in our country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom".

Advancement of Socio-Economic Rights, is inseparably intertwined with the struggle against poverty and underdevelopment. In this connection, President Mbeki in his State of the Nation address argues, " Of decisive importance to the millions of our people and the future of our country, as we meet here today, the central question we will have to answer at the end of the day is whether what we are doing as the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, as well as the fourth estate, is helping to lift from the shoulders of our people, the intolerable burden of poverty and underdevelopment"

Today, the launch of this project answers the President's question in the affirmative. Undoubtedly the launch of the Marelane Kopman MPCC represents another milestone in the advancement of Socio-Economic Rights. By extending the frontiers of development to the rural hinterland, government demonstrates its determination to bring a better life to all our people.

The Marelane Kopman MPCC, located in one of the development nodes of the ISRDS, in Cofimvaba and serving the villages Vukuna, Daliwonga, Luxhomo, Mcumngco, Dekettshill, Madikana, Mtimbini and Leveni Camana, was completed on 29 June 2001. Construction of the centre cost just more than R1 million (R1 010 976, 18) and provided temporary jobs that included training and skills transfer to 206 local community members. Government departments such as Home Affairs, Social Services and GCIS already occupy the complex.

Please allow me this opportunity to congratulate the Chris Hani District Municipality, Ntsika Municipality and Traditional leaders ,for galvanizing the community in support of the project. The Marelane Kopman MPCC was completed on schedule thanks to the unity of purpose demonstrated by all the stakeholders. Indeed in the same vein I wish to thank my colleagues from GCIS, Home Affairs, Social Services and Provincial Public Works for implementing the injunctions of our constitution on co-operative governance.

Government has resolved to provide communities with development communication, information and services in accordance with Batho Pele principles. Multi-purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) are one-stop centres where local, provincial and national government, as well as other service-providers, offer much needed services and information about government programmes to local communities.

Communities living near the MPCC and surrounding areas identify services based on their needs. Each MPCC is unique and could either be located in a single building, or be part of a cluster of buildings.

Through the MPCCs, communities will have access to technology through Information Technology Centres (ITC) or Tele-centres. Online information can also be brought to communities through Public Information

Terminals (PIT) based within the MPCCs. Technology adds value to services that are offered at an MPCC. Political neutrality and acceptance by communities of the centre, is important.

Government's ultimate ideal plan is to have one MPCC in each of the District and Metropolitan Municipalities across South Africa.

In South Africa, MPCCs have been identified and highlighted as the primary vehicle for the implementation of development communication and information programmes as they can serve as a base from which a wide range of services and products can reach communities. The aim is for communities to access such services and engage in government programmes for their own empowerment, in order for the public to ensure that they active participants in changing their lives for the better.

The MPCC approach is seen as yet one more response to the particular historical, social and economic factors that restricted the freedom of access to information and citizen participation under the previous political regime.

It is the goal of our current government to provide every South African citizen with access to information and services within 5 minutes of their place of residence within 10 years

The core purpose underlying our reconstruction and Development Programme is to better the quality of life of every South African citizen through integrated and accessible service delivery, and to translate our joint efforts into dynamic, sustainable development and future economic growth.

As national and provincial government departments, as municipalities and local organisations, we are all lending a hand in overall development of our country and this we do in a way that adheres to certain values - values considered to foster our common interest:

- Development which puts people first
- Excellent service to the community above all else
- Equipping people to contribute to their own and the nation's growth and development
- Building relationships with various stakeholders to promote integrated delivery of services
- Using appropriate technology for community development
- Encouraging community participation

In the previous financial year, the Department of Public Works spent R22,4 million developing, upgrading and building MPCCs in KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Province, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Western Cape provinces. Fourteen of these MPCCs are already operational.

For 2002/2003, about R10,4 million has been proposed for the construction and development of 16 MPCCs in KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Province and Eastern Cape due to the high rural and poverty levels in these areas.

Analysing the feedback from the respective Imbizos, there has been a demand from communities for such centres, indicating that the concept actually addresses a very acute need.

The same concept has been applied to the area of criminal justice, health, welfare, sport and recreation as well as arts, culture, science and technology, where several Community Safety Centres have already been provided.

This Marelane Kopman Centre is now in operation - it is there for you, the community to avail yourself of services and information. It is also to be cherished and celebrated as a nerve of your community to links with the rest of the world and I trust that you will nurture it.

[top](#)