

Minister of Public Works
Ms S Sigcau
23 March 2002

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Launch of Mbazwane MPCC

Salutations Master of Ceremonies: Dr B V Thabethe and Mr T E Mdletshe
Honourable Minister of Home Affairs: Dr M Buthelezi
Premier of Kwazulu-Natal: Honourable Mr Mtshali
His worship Councillor Ntuli: Mayor of Mhlabuyalinga
His worship Councillor L M Mthombeni
Mr J Netshitenzhe: CEO of GCIS
Rev. E S Dlamini
Inkosi S J Zikhali
Inkosi S H Gumede
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

Two days ago, our people observed the 8th anniversary of Human Rights Day. Yes we are observing Human Rights Day under conditions of freedom. Necessarily human rights include socio-economic rights. Socio-economic rights are the bedrock of our democracy. Otherwise freedom would be meaningless!

In South Africa, socio-economic rights are entrenched in the democratic constitution. Essentially the constitution guarantees the injunction of the Freedom Charter, namely " All shall enjoy equal Human Rights". Delivery of social services represents milestones in the realization of Human Rights. Increasingly the vision of a better life for all is becoming a reality.

In this connection, President Mbeki in his state of the Nation address observes, "Decision makers across the globe have accepted the reality that the global struggle to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment is fundamental to the well-being of human society".

Today's ceremony is an eloquent testimony of the implementation of the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme.

The Mbazwana MPCC form part of the Mbazwana cluster that consists of the following developments:

- Market stalls
- MPCC
- Handicraft centre
- Education facilities

The total cost of the project is R1.6 million. During the construction phase of the project, a sum of R273 000 in wages was invested in the local economy. Government's socio-economic objectives were achieved with respect to the following employment categories:

- Labourers = 93
- Women=48
- Youths=32
- Skilled or semi skilled=20

This recently completed infrastructure that we are launching today should serve the community in more than one way. Not only will it provide access to government services much closer to the community, (Jozini is 60 km away, Hluhluwe 74 km and Manguse 80 km), but it will also provide information of a wide ranging nature that can be accessed through the multi-purpose community centres by means of technological, on-line, facilities.

Already the national departments of Labour, Home Affairs, Welfare and the Government Communication Information System as well as municipal offices and the Rural Service System Coordinator are operational at the Mbazwana MPCC. This makes the centre answer to the objective of providing a one stop service centre.

Within the Community Based Public Works Programme, (Ilima/ Letsema), Public Works has financed the Mbazwana Cluster development, of which this Multi-Purpose Community Centre forms part. The infrastructure created here in accordance with the identified needs of this community and in tandem with the current and expected future development in this area that includes the expected increase in tourist traffic, comprise a handcraft centre, education facilities, market stalls and the MPCC.

This infrastructure contributes to the development of a stable base for investment and support to the surrounding areas, where Mbazwana has been identified as a service hub to service satellite points at Tshongwe, Mseleni, Maqobakazi and Makhasa.. All these roles are clarified in the Integrated Development Framework for this area.

But I said: "Public Works has financed ...". This is true - but as is usually the case, there is much more to it than meets the eye. The people who have participated in the construction of the projects are already aware of the difference that it made to them personally and to their immediate households. Whether they voiced their opinions and needs as to what the priorities were, or whether they found employment and training during the construction phase of the projects, they know that opportunities became available which, before, did not exist.

The driving factor of the Community Based Public Works Programme is that people must take ownership of the project, its operation, management and further development. Therefore both technical and institutional training form part of the programme. The communities should experience that development is actually growing from the hands that they themselves are lending in the process of creating a better life for all.

Government has explicitly committed itself to the pursuance of integrated service delivery. We have called on national, provincial and local government bodies in partnership with the private and civil sectors to ensure that basic development infrastructure is created and potential economic growth unlocked. All our communities - also those sadly neglected in the past, such as the deep rural areas where we find some of our poorest communities, should be able to access basic goods and services. And within the Integrated Rural Sustainable Development drive of Government these principles are practically manifested. It does however remain all of our joint responsibility to work together, to lend a hand, to rise up and act.

I THANK YOU

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