

**Minister of Public Works**  
**Mr J Radebe**  
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## **At the PACT Graduation Ceremony**

Master of ceremonies, distinguished guests, PACT's graduandes, ladies and gentlemen. It is indeed a great honour for me to be invited to speak at today's graduation ceremony of PACT.

I wish to congratulate today's graduandes for the relentless work they have put into the Strategic Management course. We also look forward to today's PACT's graduandes to continue to provide leadership in their respective organisations, and others to take up senior positions in government.

You come from varied NGO backgrounds - housing, human rights, health, literacy, democracy, governance and conflict resolution - but you have one mission in common: and that is to serve the disadvantaged people of this country.

The Strategic Management Course, which PACT introduced three years ago, is indeed PACT's demonstration of its outstanding commitment to seek out opportunities to assist government and NGOs to come together to address South Africa's enormous development mandate.

In this course you have been offered skills training and capacity - building subjects like management, strategic planning, strengthening the effectiveness of governing boards, financial management, financial sustainability, programme and project management, etc.

In designing this course, PACT was recognising that the quality of the interface between government and NGOs is crucial to development because if either side of this partnership cannot overcome its institutional constraints, development efforts will not succeed.

As government, we are sincerely indebted to PACT for the role it has played in South Africa by strengthening non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their partnerships with other sectors in contributing towards development through technical assistance and training, and sometimes through grant funds.

PACT has also played a pivotal role in the creation of the Transitional National Development Trust. PACT has also been a leading participant in the present discussions and workshops on the establishment of the National Development Agency, with the last workshop having been on Thursday.

During the apartheid era, the struggle for liberation meant NGOs defined their roles as protest and promoters of human rights. At the same time, many actually played a role in development by helping to set up community clinics and schools, initiating income - generating projects and forming self-help initiatives to try and overcome the lack of services in black communities.

One of the most damaging legacies of apartheid was the almost total breakdown of basic services in black communities. Where these services existed, it is because an NGO worked in partnership with the community to develop and provide them.

The origins of involvement by South African NGOs in development are deeply rooted in the past 25 years. These organisations have filled gaps and provided desperately needed assistance, guidance and resources within our disadvantaged communities.

The NGO activities have ranged from direct stress relief and welfare functions to a carefully planned integrated involvement, based on sensitivity and understanding, in which their activities are directed towards capacity-building and enablement that leads ultimately to the empowerment of impoverished and marginalised communities.

The present scenario whereby a democratically elected government is mobilising the country's human and material resources towards nation-building, and the development of a sustainable economic growth represents a framework with which all sectors of society can operate for the betterment of the social welfare for all.

This is very important because it places ordinary people and organs of society, through such institutions as

NGOs, at the epicentre of socio-economic growth. Government regards NGOs as equal partners in the process of developing previously marginalised societies. No one should be in doubt as to our commitment to working in partnership with all stakeholders in delivering socio-economic growth.

The philosophy of government is not to give hand outs to people but rather to create an environment whereby development becomes everybody's responsibility.

This means that the South African road to socio-economic development can only be guaranteed if all efforts at reconstructing the country are people-driven and people-centred.

Government, in this regard, recognises the need to develop appropriate policies and practices in relation to the development process, and to provide relevant skills to the previously marginalised.

We therefore welcome a healthy debate on development perspectives, programmes, needs and an empowerment and capacity-building process as a way of building democracy in this country.

Development is one particular area where NGO's have a comparative advantage because of their ability to innovate, their enthusiasm and commitment, their flexibility and lack of bureaucracy.

It is therefore important and necessary to facilitate the participation of NGO's in the Reconstruction and Development Programme, so that their unique experiences and skills are harnessed in a positive and accountable manner.

In our efforts as the Department of Public Works to create jobs, provide infrastructure and enhance human resources we work very closely with NGOs. We have established a partnership with the Community Employment Programme of the Independent Development Trust, under the auspices of the Department's Community Based Public Works Programme.

The Community Based Public Works Programme is based on basic needs and recognises that conventional development methods have failed in the past mainly due to attempts to impose development on communities without seeking involvement of these communities in the development or decision-making process.

Nor was any effort made to bring about the social conditions or necessary attitudes required for sustained development.

The Community Based Public Works Programme is therefore people driven and people centred. Without local support or enthusiasm, a public works programme is destined to failure.

South Africa faces a pressing need for infrastructure, both urban and rural, for example classrooms, clinics, water supply, sewerage reticulation, storm water drainage, dams and irrigation canals.

The programme builds such assets while at the same time creating jobs and providing skills to our people. It targets the most vulnerable in our communities - women, youth and single-parent households.

The Department allocated R100 million to NGOs, of which R70 million went to the IDT. The other R150 million was allocated to the provinces, for the programme. By the time the programme is finished, it will have produced over 68 000 jobs and created over 900 assets.

Under the programme, we believe that there is considerable evidence that properly constructed employment creation projects can be established, based on the use of labour-intensive methods, to construct and maintain the required infrastructure, thus creating skills and institutional capacities.

This can create five to seven times more employment per unit of expenditure.

But job creation alone is not enough. There must also be concern for the quality of the product and the economic efficiency of the work, and the infrastructure we create.

Another project we are involved with is the Clean and Green Campaign. This involves three primary stakeholders, namely Public Works; South African Breweries; and the Keep South African Beautiful, an NGO. A total budget of R13.8 million was allocated, R10.8 million of which came from Public Works.

KSAB, as experts in waste management, are responsible for the management of the programme. As a result of KSAB's successful implementation of a cost effective waste management system in an informal settlement in Alexander, it was decided that a short-term measure - a demonstration of the Clean and Green Campaign - be presented to all nine provinces.

The objective was to select not more than two areas beleaguered by litter in each province, in which demonstrations were to be conducted over a 12-month period.

During this period of demonstration, local authorities of the identified areas are expected to commit themselves by providing one programme manager and a means of waste disposal, for example a truck. In each provincial presentation, the presence of local authority representation has thus been most crucial.

A prime function of the campaign is to break the deadlock between the community and local authorities, where the people want community services to be provided before they pay for them, and the authorities want services to be paid for before they are supplied.

The starting point for the campaign is liaison with community leaders and local authorities to establish their waste management needs and their commitment to a cleaner environment and the subsequent nomination of one community per local authority to participate in the programme.

A representative community committee then appoints contractors and supervisors to run the campaign. These nominees are trained by KSAB, and the organisation monitors their progress.

Each contractor is responsible for servicing 250 homes in his or her own area, removing domestic refuse from each house once a week, plus any other litter in the area.

The refuse is placed in plastic bags and either stored at an agreed location for collection by the local authority or taken to a waste skip. The local authority transports the waste to a disposal site or recycling depot where recyclable material such as cans and bottles is sorted and organic material converted into compost.

As the system is community-driven, it is seen by the people as "their" project where they determine their own waste management standards, manage the system and check to see that the entire community is pulling its weight.

As no private contractor is involved in the Clean and Green project, there is no outside enrichment and the community is, for all practical purposes, the main contractor which manages the waste management system, with the consent of the local authority.

This also means that the community is far more likely to pay for the service as its own people are being employed.

I wish also to mention here, which, although not a partnership between the Department and an NGO, also demonstrates our commitment to partnering with the private sector. The Siyakha initiative is a partnership between the Department and the South African Sugar Association.

The Department is funding the initiative to the tune of R12 million, while SASA is contributing financially and materially to this programme.

The Siyakha initiative aims to develop infrastructure in rural areas which are home to 45 000 small-scale farmers in the sugar belt that stretches across the Eastern Cape, Kwa Zulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. It is estimated that all in all over 187 000 people will benefit.

The South African sugar industry is an important component in the economy of the region, employing some 150 000 people, on whom more one million others depend. It is therefore imperative for this industry to ensure that it ploughs back some of its profits to social programmes to meet basic local needs, develop human resources and build the economy.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate government's belief that NGOs must position themselves as a significant stakeholder in socio-economic construction and development, community empowerment and capacity building.

I thank you.

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