



## **ADDRESS BY FREE STATE MEC OF PUBLIC WORKS, MS ES MABE TO THE FIRST PROVINCIAL EPWP SUMMIT HELD AT EMOYA ESTATE, BLOEMFONTEIN**

27 September 2012

Programme Director  
Honourable Premier, Mr ES Magashule,  
Honourable Members of Executive Council amongst us today,  
Honourable Executive Mayors, Mayors and Councillors,  
Chairperson of SALGA-FS, Dr Mzangwa,  
Honourable members of the Portfolio Committee of Public Works in attendance,  
Our Heads of Departments and Municipal Managers,  
All our distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning!

It is indeed with great appreciation that I get to address this Summit, which is chiefly being constituted through eminent representatives from municipalities, public entities and departments in the province.

The subject matter concerning our gathering is a reminder to the fact that in 2004 the ANC-led government identified the goal of halving poverty in South Africa by 2014.

Back then, Expanded Public Works Programme was introduced by government shortly after First Decade of democracy and amid serious contemplation in terms of the direction, which needed to be followed to advance into the Second Decade of our country's democracy. We had advanced the proposition that our government inherited a country of two economies whereby the First is developed and part of the globe and the Second is characterised by poverty, underdevelopment and marginalisation.

Thus EPWP implementation constituted one of the key programmes through which government responded to the challenges of the Second Economy such as: Poverty, lack of work experience and skills.

We are gathering here today, over eight years into the Second Decade of our Democracy to come and take stock of what progress has been achieved in relation to EPWP implementation targets and most importantly, to reach consensus on intensified and a coherent approach of EPWP implementation.

We are therefore humbled by your attendance because it signifies your willingness to robustly engage and chart a way forward for collaboration and forging of strategic partnerships in the successful implementation of this important Programme.

It is important to stress a need for all spheres of government to work together in an integrated and structured manner if we are to succeed in our quest to use EPWP as a vehicle to alleviate poverty through creation of labour-intensive work opportunities.

When we made pronouncement earlier this year about the hosting of this Summit, we never planned for it to take place during this month of September, which coincidentally happens to be the same month during which the first phase of EPWP was launched just over eight years ago. That is why we are considering it an imperative for us to pause and assess how we have fared in our overall work concerning EPWP.

Our assessment should stem from the fact that the second Phase of EPWP, which was launched in 2009, has a provincial target of creating 30 000 plus and national target of 4,5 million work opportunities of its five years period until 2014.



Programme Director, earlier this year when tabling the budget vote speech of our department, I have indicated that under EPWP, we had a target of 26 979 in terms of creation of work opportunities in the past financial year. We are proud to pronounce that we succeeded in almost doubling the set target by far, since a total of 43 473 work opportunities had been created by then. Of importance from the latter is that 10 777 Full Time Equivalent work opportunities were realised. We also managed to increase the number of Public Bodies receiving and drawing the incentive grant. This incentive grant is meant to reinforce and reward good work in the implementation of EPWP.

We now have to work with an accelerated pace towards achieving the set targets for this 2nd Phase of EPWP in the province.

Consistent with what has already being outlined as the Purpose of this Summit, I hope that this Summit will help us to achieve the following:

- Intensified Service Delivery through the implementation of labour-intensive models.
- 100% participation in the EPWP and reporting by all municipalities.
- Access to incentive grant by all Public Bodies, especially those in rural areas,
- Concrete ways of improving the overall participation of all rural municipalities in the Community Works programmes.
- Concrete ways to ensure that the full potential of the Non-State Sector is optimally achieved through the participation of CBOs, FBOs and NGOs.
- Increase of understanding of the EPWP across all four sectors of the programme, which includes the Infrastructure, Social, Non-State and the Environmental and Culture sector, as well as possibilities for Enterprise Development.
- Clear ways to Provide Public Bodies with critical information , content and contact information and
- Consensus on institutional arrangements.

While the significance of EPWP in terms of its relevance to uplift the socio-economic conditions of our people cannot be overemphasised, we should always make it our business to clarify the point that EPWP does not represent the Alfa and Omega when viewed within the context of an array of existing government interventions and programmes.

Again, needless to mention that the success of this programme in our Province lies in the improved and concerted cooperation of all of us gathered here, I wish to implore you to also dedicate time and debate about how coordination of EPWP as one of the key responsibilities that as a Province we are charged with can be strengthened.

Allow me as I conclude Programme Director to assert that we are blessed here in our Province to be led by someone of our honourable Premier's calibre, especially when it comes to his unwavering passion towards directly working with and amongst different communities. This is where I firmly believe that an opportunity exist for us to make it a point that indeed our yearning for EPWP to become a standing agenda item in all decision making structures is realised.

We cannot as well, as we implement EPWP, afford to disregard the importance of innovation and what is commonly referred to as Social Facilitation especially in the light of the current wide-spread community unrests within communities.

It is my sincere hope that the discussions and resolutions you will produce at this Summit will give concrete expression to the Strategic perspective of EPWP implementation in our Province as I urge you to remember the words of George Wilhelm when he said: "Nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion"

I thank you all.