

ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, MRS H.J MASHAMBA, AT THE EVENT OF INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY, PHAHLADIRA VILLAGE, LEPHALALE MUNICIPALITY.

15th November 2016

Programme Director;

The Executive Mayor of Waterberg District Municipality, Cllr. Morris Mataboge;

The Mayor of Lephalale Local Municipality, Cllr. Moloko Maseko;

Councillors present here today;

Our esteemed traditional leadership;

The HOD for Social Development, Ms. Daphne Ramokgopa;

Our Agencies SASSA and NDA;

**Management and staff of sister
departments;
Ladies and Gentlemen;
All protocol observed.**

Good morning!

Thobela!

We thank you for the opportunity to address you on this important day of commemoration. Although the official day of commemoration of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty has already taken place worldwide, the problem remains a reality. We may therefore regard every day as a day to focus on the eradication of poverty and creating employment.

Programme Director;

Throughout the world, countries are grappling with many societal issues, including the individuals and whole communities living in poverty.

It is for this reason that the United Nations and its member states have been observing International Day for Eradication of Poverty for nearly twenty years. The aim of this day is to promote and demonstrate mutual understanding, solidarity and a shared responsibility to support people living in poverty.

In South Africa we deal with a dire situation of abject poverty and hopelessness, due to the imbalances of the past. However, as a caring government, we have the mandate to address this issue, here and now, with a sense of urgency and with a multi-faceted approach.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal to “end poverty in all its forms everywhere” recognises the fact that poverty results not from the lack of just one material thing, but from many different factors, that affect the lives of people living in poverty.

We need to understand, as a collective, how important it is to recognise and address the humiliation and exclusion endured by many people living in poverty.

The ANC-led government has therefore established mechanisms, policies and programmes to address the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment that continue to affect the lives of many of our people.

We are looking at a holistic approach to implement integrated anti-poverty programmes, which aim to address not only social assistance, but also sustainable integration of all communities into economic activity.

Government's response to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger has, for the past 22 years, been comprehensive. It includes free primary health care for all and compulsory education for children aged between seven and thirteen years, to name but a few.

Government's most successful strategy in combating abject poverty up to so far, has been its Social Assistance Programme that provides relief to over 14 million South Africans. However, our efforts extend far beyond just handing out grants.

In fact, our aim is to ensure sustainable livelihoods towards the National Development Plan 2030. We believe in strengthening communities to become self-sustainable instead of having to become dependent on hand-outs only.

We therefore do careful research of impoverished areas, to ensure that we understand the demographics and challenges of a specific area.

During the demographic profiling of Phahladira, various pressing challenges were identified. These include, but are not limited to, unemployment and food insecurity; school drop-out; teenage pregnancy and substance abuse.

Here, I wish to make an earnest plea to the youth of Phahladira to complete their education; to

refrain from substance abuse and to please abstain.

Young women, you need to get an education before you become mothers. You are not ready to take on such responsibility.

You as young people need to take action and plan for your future. You are the future of South Africa.

On Tuesday, we had the opportunity to interact with some young people at the Provincial Youth Camp that was held in Vhembe. It was evident from their discussions about substance abuse, that we cannot over-emphasise the dangers of substances abuse. It is affecting the health, wellbeing, security and functioning of our communities.

Programme Director;

The Department of Social Development will continuously liaise with various stakeholders like the Departments of Agriculture and Labour, the local municipality, Further Education Training institutions, South African Police Services and others, in order to come with a holistic approach to all the challenges of this and other areas of the Province.

We want to leave a lasting legacy and visible improvements in the areas we have identified as so-called hotspots of high poverty.

A Community Nutrition Development Centre will soon be completed in this area, ensuring that nobody goes to bed on an empty stomach. Today we will also be giving some assistance to families

who are in immediate need of help, in the form of food parcels.

The Department is further also supporting the Segwati Early Childhood Centre, which was initially built by ESKOM. This is living testimony to how we can achieve more, when we work together as civil society, government and the business fraternity.

In closure, Programme Director

I once again implore parents to know at all times where their children are. We hear far too many reports of children going missing. Many are being abducted and murdered. Many are never seen again and may have fallen victim to human trafficking. Let us all say: Hands off our children!

I further make an earnest plea to all to help us take a stand against all forms of abuse and neglect towards older persons; children; women; people living with disabilities and all other vulnerable individuals.

Let us fight poverty and build a sustainable future and caring society, together!

I thank you!

Ke a leboga!