



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

KZN DARD HOSTS THE MEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development MEC, Ms. Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa, has been hailed for creating a platform that enables male staff members to express themselves and seek support when needed.

About 400 male staff members drawn from across all the Department's offices in the province gathered at the Old KwaZulu-Natal Legislature in uLundi, on Friday the 25th of July 2025, as part of the Men Empowerment Programme. Speakers included Traditional Leadership, male staff who commended the gathering saying they would like to have an internal men's forum that would meet quarterly to address challenges affecting their well-being. They said this would offer them opportunities to speak out and seek help.

kaMadlopha-Mthethwa has also pledged to support initiatives that assist male staff in addressing societal challenges that sometimes affect their work, "Nowadays we often focus more attention on women and young people because men are often perceived as strong, masculine and more advantaged than their female counterparts. Within our communities where we lived while growing up, both urban and rural, we've long used phrases that perceived men as strong, masculine and empowered beings than their female counterpart. Even using sayings that emboldened men such as 'indoda ayikhali' or 'real men don't show emotions.' As humanity evolves, we're slowly recognizing the power of vulnerability. We now have within our workplaces - sessions aimed at empowering men to express themselves and seek help when needed," said MEC kaMadlopha-Mthethwa.

She said the clarion call directed to men is to urge them to speak out and seek help, saying the Government and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has a wide range of programmes that can be partnered with other organisations to address the specific needs of male staff members. These programmes include leadership development, skills enhancement, mental health support, mentorship and capacity building. All these programmes are available to support your growth, enhance your capacity and empower you in your work environment.















