



KAMADLOPHA-MTHETHWA BRINGS HOPE TO REVIVE TUGELA FERRY IRRIGATION SCHEME'S ENGINE PUMPS

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ms. Thembeni kaMadlopha-Mthethwa, has pledged her Department's commitment to revitalize ailing community projects, which are crucial to the livelihoods of numerous families. kaMadlopha-Mthethwa together with Departmental officials conducted an oversight visit to Tugela Ferry in uMsinga as part of her efforts to engage with stakeholders, address concerns, and provide impactful solutions to ensure that these projects thrive.

One of the projects, the uMvithi Cooperative, part of the broader Tugela Ferry Irrigation Scheme located along the banks of the uThukela River, has 180 members whose operations have stalled due to a malfunctioning of two engine pumps for irrigation, which need urgent intervention. The two pumps were damaged by the floods in January 2024.

The second pump supplies water to Block Seven cooperative - uMgolweni which was also affected. The irrigation scheme which boasts seven primary cooperatives, cultivates and sells fresh produce to small and large retailers in and out of the uMsinga area, and has proven a cornerstone for many of its 1,800 strong members, also feeding and financially supporting their thousands of families.

Addressing the leadership of the scheme representing primary cooperatives, KaMadlopha-Mthethwa said, the Department undertook this visit as part of the Operation Siyahlola to hear the concerns of farmers in the schemes and brainstorm possible solutions. "These solutions include working with the Rural Development Department to repair the water pump and address related issues and ensure the success of affected cooperatives. I have noted all your concerns, putting great acknowledgement on the issue of engine pump multifunctioning, as it affects your business operations and livelihoods. Through our officials, the Department offers solutions for the wellbeing of these gardens, which have sustained numerous families



for many years. I pledge to work with all stakeholders, including traditional leaders, to develop permanent solutions to challenges hindering the progress of our rural farmers."

"Our Premier, Mr AT Ntuli, has tasked us to ensure that every corner of the province has greenery, and we are committed to achieving this call by assisting struggling projects and restoring them to their former glory," concluded KaMadlopha-Mthethwa.

The MEC also distributed fertilizers to some of the cooperatives within the irrigation scheme.

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