



agriculture & rural development

Department:
Agriculture and Rural Development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

“Asiguqule ezoLimo zibe isikompilo lethu”

SPEAKING NOTES FOR THE KZN MEC FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

THE HONOURABLE THEMBA MTHEMBU

DURING THE MULTI-PLANTING SEASON LAUNCH

30 November 2017

Programme Director

Amakhosi asendlunkulu

Izinduna

All District Mayors

All local Municipality Mayors

Chairperson of Agriculture and Rural Development Mrs N. Simelane-Zulu

All members of the Agriculture and Rural Development Portfolio Committee

Leaders of different political parties

KZNWARD

KZNYARD

Farmer associations

Representatives of Pannar Seeds (PTY) Ltd

Mr. Ntombela of eMasangweni Amahlophe Partnership Project

All stakeholders present

Farmers

Officials

Ladies and Gentlemen

We gather here today during a significant time in our calendar, a time when the World observes the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and

Children campaign, under the theme "**Leave no one behind: end violence against women and girls.** Since the year has been dedicated to the life and spirit of liberation icon O.R Tambo in South Africa the Sub-theme for the 16 days campaign is: "**O.R Tambo and the emancipation of women.**"

This year marks 19 years since the adaptation of the 16 days of activism by the United Nations. However, women across the world and our country still face various act of violation and discrimination in society, the workplace and at home.

Recent data from StatsSA indicates that 21% (one in five) women have been victims of violence in South Africa while more than 100 people are raped every day. Police records, between April and December 2016 showed that "14,333 people were murdered in South Africa and there were 37,630 sexual offences". Furthermore, studies by the South African Medical Council indicate that an estimated 40% of women were victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) while approximately half of South Africa's children will be abused before they turn 18 years of age.

As we gather here today in this community, we need to make a collective commitment to fight against the abuse of women and children in our homes, our institutions and our communities. We cannot live in a society where women and children live in constant fear and violation.

It is further discouraging that women and children continue to be the face of situations of extreme poverty, inequality and unemployment. The bulk of people who make up the 55.5 percent of persons living in poverty in the country are black Africans in rural areas, majority of whom are women and children aged below 17. The last living conditions survey revealed that childhood development was threatened in the 13 million South African children living in situations of poverty, as some were classified as malnourished and stunted. These societal challenges are conditions in which violence, degradation and humiliation thrive.

This is why last year during a departmental strategy review in November, we made a commitment to ensure that there is a biasness' towards women, youth, and persons with disability in all programmes of the Department.

I further announced during the delivery of the Budget Speech that we would re-introduce the Directorate Women, Youth and Persons with Disability to ensure that support to vulnerable groups is given the attention it deserves.

In the Department, we have located food and nutrition security at the core of all our programmes. This emanates from the knowledge that eliminating hunger and malnutrition, is a precondition for eradicating poverty.

All our programmes have been set out to ensure that every family in this province has a healthy and nutritious meal on the table daily.

Our food and nutrition security strategy speaks directly to the needs of communities that are dependent on starch heavy diets as nutritious food has become unaffordable, meaning their health and standard of living is often compromised.

Tomorrow the 1st of December, the World will celebrate World Aids Day under the Global theme of **The Right to Health**. It is imperative that we are clear that health is not just about taking your medication. Health speaks to a collaboration

of things such as exercising, drinking water and eating foods that will give your body the vitamins and minerals needed to sustain itself. How do we expect people to take medication if they do not have food?

In as much as proper and adequate healthcare is a constitutionally guaranteed right in South Africa, so is the right to access sufficient food and water.

The Food and Nutrition Security Directorate in the Department has been tasked with ensuring that the following Sub-Programmes are initiated across the Province under Operation Xoshindlala:

- a. One-Home-One-Garden;
- b. One-Household-One-Fruit-Tree,
- c. One-Household-One-Hectare;
- d. Nutritious Food Basket;
- e. Indigenous goats;
- f. Indigenous chickens,
- g. Indigenous crops and fruits;
- h. Seedlings for community gardens;
- i. Urban Agriculture; and
- j. Mushroom Programme

We are saying, plant a fruit tree in your home MaNgcobo. Have a garden with cabbage, spinach, onions, mushrooms and various indigenous vegetables. Let your land be your source of food and nutrition. We as the Department will assist you with various farming implements, seeds, education and advice as well as mechanization. The Department has set aside R200 million in this financial year, to support all Food and Nutrition Security programmes across the Province.

For the Zululand District in this financial year, the Department has set aside over R1.7 million towards the establishment of 374 household gardens, 7 community gardens, 4 one-household-one-hectare gardens and one mushroom project. All the above-mentioned projects will benefit an estimated 508 community members.

This does not include the R7.3 million that has been set aside towards projects such as the Mbangweni Beef project in the Abaqulusi local municipality, where the Department is developing infrastructure as well as providing production inputs to the value of R2.2 million. Another R2.2 million for the Qhawe Project in Nongoma, to construct broiler units and provide inputs and equipment. The Dippi Layers Project in Ulundi where the Department has committed to construct and supply 3 layer units and inputs as well as the drilling and equipping of a borehole.

As we launch the 2017/2018 Multi-Planting Season, I need to reiterate what I said when launching the Food and Nutrition Security programme in Manxili earlier in the year. As a Department we have shifted our planting season approach. Previously, we have focused our efforts into mobilising farmers and the general population around one planting season in the spring and summer period, which mainly saw commodities such as maize and beans being planted.

We have, after research and consultation with various stakeholders, realised that for the attainment of food and nutrition security as well as the development of sustainable commercial farming activities, we need to instil a culture of planting throughout the year.

The Departmental approach has now been shifted to focus on supporting crop production based on the exploitation of vast natural resources available in the Province and the potential of crops in respective Districts.

Warmer Districts with light frost such as Zululand and King Cetshwayo should be planting cabbage, lettuce, peppers, chillies and beetroot all year-round. Now is the right time for the planting of sweet potatoes, leeks, brinjal and amadumbe. Whereas colder Districts such as uMzinyathi, uMgugundlovu, Amajuba and some areas in the Zululand District should be planting beans, broccoli and maize.

Let me also make mention of the importance of planting indigenous crops. Indigenous vegetation offers unique opportunities to diversify farming systems. They are also able to tolerate the harsh weather conditions brought on by climate change, such as the recent drought, which continues to affect certain areas in the province. These plants are resistant to pests and diseases and are highly nutritional with Vitamin A and Iron. Examples are imifino, jugo beans, izindlubu, amathanga and amadumbe.

The Department has set aside R56 million for crop production in the 2017/18 financial year set to cover an estimated 24 092 hectares of land across the Province. These crops are separated as follows:

1. 7165 hectares of Maize
2. 15 140 hectares of Dry Beans
3. 1137 hectares of Vegetable crops
4. 100 hectares Soyabeans
5. 200 hectares of cotton and 350 hectares of other crops

Already, over 30 percent of seeds have been delivered to beneficiaries across the Province while the remainder will be delivered as per season of the commodity.

In the Zululand District we will plant 5565 hectares of which 357 has been ploughed, 378 has been planted. Beneficiaries are estimated above 1370 with employment opportunities for 54 people.

Today's launch is an indication of the vast difference, Government partnering with the community and the private sector can make in ensuring we change the socio-economic conditions of our communities and the people that live in them. The fencing that covers these lands was donated by a resident of Babanango, Mr Ntombela to uplift the community by bringing about lasting change, while Pannar Seeds (PTY) Ltd has donated white hybrid seeds which will be planted in 30 hectares of these lands. The Department will provide Mechanization and other inputs. In totality, this partnership is expected to benefit 32 households which were solely dependent on grants for daily survival. Through the development of this project, they will now have a source of food and income. This truly is an indication that working together, we can do more. Siyabonga Babu Ntombela, and Pannar Seeds (PTY) Ltd.

Bantu bakithi umhlaba uyimpilo, and as department responsible for agriculture and rural development we remain committed to fighting poverty, creating employment and ensuring that we build communities that are food secure and sustainable for now and for future generations. Let's continue to work together in making the Province of KwaZulu-Natal prosperous through agriculture and make Agriculture our Culture.

I thank you.