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Department of Public Works
Departament van Openbare Werke
Lefapha La Ditiro Tsa Setshaba

OFFICE OF THE MEC

PRESS RELEASE

20 JUNE 2006

MEC YAWA CHALLENGES YOUTH TO SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

Opportunities for Youth in Construction and entrepreneur support were the focus of the dialogue that North West Public Works MEC for Public Works, Honourable Howard Yawa, Head of the Department Mr Obakeng Mongale and senior officials of the department held with young people involved in the construction sector on Tuesday 20 June 2006 in Mafikeng.

The objective of the dialogue was to evaluate youth involvement and participation in the construction sector and to highlight opportunities available for youth in the construction industry and through programmes of the Department of Public Works.

In his opening remarks, MEC Yawa said that youth involvement in the construction sector is critical to close the gap between the First Economy and the Second economy and to meet the critical skills shortage in the construction sector.

The Department reported that although government through the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment and the Preferential Procurement Policy Acts sought to also empower young people through tendering and procurement processes, their participation has not improved significantly.

In its presentation, the Provincial Youth Commission through its Deputy Chairperson raised lack of funding for start-up for youth interested in business, exit opportunities for youth involved in government initiated



programmes and lack of co-ordination among youth development agencies as critical challenges to youth development.

Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) highlighted support services that they offer youth entrepreneurs and invited them to access the Umsobomvu Business Development Services Voucher Programme through it to assist them in business planning, feasibility studies, marketing plans, bookkeeping and Accounting, Contracting and Mentorship.

The Dialogue resolved to strengthen partnership by among others:

- Encouraging Youth contractors to register with the Construction Industry Development Board
- Establishing a database of youth in construction
- Assisting youth, particularly EPWP beneficiaries to establish cooperatives to leverage opportunities as part of exit strategy
- Popularising the use of SEDA and Enterprise Information Centres to source opportunities for youth
- Convening a Provincial Youth In Construction Indaba.

Provincially 5355 youth benefitted through job and training opportunities created through the Expanded Public Works Programme in the last financial year, while the department of Public Works established 38 Learnership contractors as a contribution towards deepening youth development.

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