



**the dpw**

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## **GOVERNMENT SECTORS MUST STRENGTHEN RELATIONS TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY, SAYS THIBEDI**

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**By Lemogang Rakobane and Sidwell Medupe**

North West MEC for Public Works, Jerry Thibedi said government sectors need to enhance inter-governmental relations in order to accelerate service delivery. He was speaking at the public hearing meeting organised by National Council of Provinces in Ikageng outside Potchefstroom. The hearing focused mainly on the impact of Expanded Public Works Programme in relation to poverty alleviation and job creation.

During the interaction with the community, there were concerns raised by municipalities that EPWP projects from provincial departments were not communicated to them. As such, this created a lot of confusion amongst departments, municipalities and communities.

Responding to the issues raised, Thibedi applauded public members for their braveness to speak up their minds. He emphasized that in order for service delivery to be enhanced, both government and communities need to work hand in hand. He also stressed the importance of inter-governmental relations, as it will speed up service delivery. Thibedi committed his department to working closely with municipalities regarding project planning for the purposes of proper implementation of such projects.

This is in line with the support of the Local Government Five Year Strategic Plan and to increase the number of EPWP Projects in the province. The department in partnership with the National department of Public Works is currently participating in a technical team deployed to support some municipalities in the planning and implementation of EPWP projects.

Explaining to the communities about the short-lived projects, the MEC said that the purpose of EPWP is to transfer skills to people and make them marketable and employable. He encouraged the beneficiaries to take the projects serious, as these will be their ticket to success.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Minister for Public Works, Professor Ntopile Kganyago encouraged youth to obtain exemption in their matric and apply for bursaries in the department.

“ The department of Public Works offers bursaries in surveying, engineering, architecture and project management to individuals who wish to pursue construction as their career of choice. This will also address the shortage of professionals in the construction-building environment in our country”, said Kganyago.

Earlier, members of the National Council of Provinces visited departmental EPWP/NYS projects in Potchefstroom and were satisfied with the progress made thus far. Members amongst others asked whether the department is having an exit strategy for the beneficiaries.

The department explained that there is a national directive on NYS projects that compels it to absorb 5% of beneficiaries per financial year. There are learner contractor development opportunities within the Department therefore they will be invited to any form of training through open adverts.

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