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IAAF's rumpus over Caster would be mute, had she dropped out of the race or was last to cross the tape, said North West Transport MEC in his address to an ``Indaba With Women In Construction'', in Mafikeng

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North West Public Works, Roads and Transport MEC today (Mon) questioned whether the rumpus over the gender of our 800m gold medalist would be so extreme, had she dropped out or finished last in the race.

Addressing the third ``Indaba With Women In Construction'' in Mafikeng today (Mon), Mahlakeng Mahlakeng rebuked the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) for questioning and putting to test, the gender of Mokgadi Semanya, fondly known as Caster.

``Is it because she was `simply the best' athlete on the track to deserve this unkind treatment from IAAF and those in support of verifying her gender?'' asked Mahlakeng.

He expressed doubts if IAAF would have ``lifted a finger'' if Semeya, of Limpopo, was the last to cross the finish line or had dropped out of the race during the World Athletics Championships held in Berlin, Germany.

Turning to the ``who-is-who'' in women construction in the province, Mahlakeng cautioned that the meeting was ``not a forum or consultation or network to get government contracts''.

``I do not want to break your hearts. My department is about service delivery and not to make people rich,'' he said.

Mahlakeng said his department would be scaling-down on programmes in order to divert resources to key projects aimed at addressing job creation and fighting poverty.

He challenged women contractors to begin asking:
What is it that we (women in construction) who are doing can do for the country?
``especially against the global meltdown''.

``As one of our many stake holders in partnership, we can do more to achieve the priorities of government and create sustainable livelihood to pushing back the frontiers of poverty,'' Mahlakeng said.

End