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WOMEN CONTRACTORS ASSERTING THEMSELVES SAYS MEC YAWA

North West MEC for Public Works, Honourable Howard Yawa says women contractors are asserting themselves very well in the male-dominated construction Industry. MEC Yawa said this in his closing remarks at the Dialogue with Women in Construction held at the Mafikeng Hotel School last Friday.

The objective of the Dialogue organised by the Department of Public Works in partnership with the North West Chapter of the South African Women in Construction (SAWIC) and NAFCOC Women's Chamber was to strengthen partnership with women in construction. Its purpose was to also evaluate women involvement and participation in the construction sector and highlight opportunities available for women in the sector.

MEC Yawa said that the ANC government believes that women are an indispensable part of any transformation process therefore it is imperative to bring them to the centre of all developments. He said that to give meaning to fundamental principles of equality, representivity, participation, and inclusivity enshrined in the constitution, his department has awarded contracts to the value of R95, 149 million to women contractors.

“The current boom in the property and building sector signals the beginning of sustained growth, underscoring the centrality of the construction sector to the accelerated and Shared Growth initiative for South Africa (Asgisa). Driven by increasing public and private sector investment in infrastructure, the construction sector will need to more



than double its output over the next ten years. Investment growth provides immense opportunities to increase the participation of women within the industry,” said MEC Yawa.

The National Project Coordinator for National Black Contractors and Allied Trades (NABCAT), Ms Vuyokasi Losi told Women Contractors that economic participation remains a challenge for women. She said forging a successful strategic partnership with government departments, private sector, and other development agencies in the industry was critical in achieving a balance between the interests of each sector partner.

In her presentation, Chairperson of SAWIC North West, Ms Thembi Matabela, said that although women are faced with challenges in doing their business, the Department of Public Works should be applauded for the support it has shown to women. Matabela pleaded with the women to uplift to uplift each other and to employ unemployed youth and women in their companies.

Representing Pretoria Portland Cement (PPC) as a sponsor for the historic dialogue, Mr Wayne Milligan (Technical Support Manager for PPC) committed his company to train emerging women contractors in basic business skills, training in cement products, cement techniques, plastering and basic concrete technology as they have done with members of the Women in Housing Initiative in Gauteng.

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