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Department:
Public Works, Roads and Transport
North West Provincial Government
Republic of South Africa

Modiri Molema Road
Old Parliament Complex
Mmabatho, 2735
Private Bag X 2080, Mmabatho, 2735
Republic of South Africa
Tel.: +27 (18) 388 1252
Fax: 086 535 1538
Website: www.nwpg.gov.za/public_works

Road projects already benefiting communities...

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MEC Raymond Elisha is taking strides to visit and oversee road projects of which he recently started with Tlakgameng road, in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District. This is part of the resolutions taken during the road summit, to ensure that road projects are implemented and completed accordingly.

The R218m project awarded to Liviero Civils, commenced two years back and is now open for use by communities. The main road works included the following: 38 km of surfaced road, storm water culverts, complete with headwalls, wing walls and stone-pitching. Two sub-contractors were awarded paving of a 3.8km internal road (Lesotho Road) using labour intensive methods.

Local labour for the entire project was targeted at 150 and to date 251 local community members were employed and trained to facilitate cleaning and finishing of the road reserves after construction. To date, 34 local Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME) have been engaged and were assisted through training - skills and management; mentoring and support; ensure that they have all the relevant documentation, registrations etc, to fulfill all legal requirements of owning small enterprises.

One of the SMMEs who benefited is a local woman subcontractor, Keitumetse Letlhaku of Thebeitsile Construction, who constructed kerbing for the entire Lesotho road, an internal road of 3.8km paved road. Her construction company currently has six males in its employ.

Although the project went very well, a few challenges experienced on site during the project were highlighted and they included: excessive rutting of gravel roads between towns, excessive storm water erosion, storm water drainage, excessive dust pollution which compromises the health and safety of the road-users.

The contractor also constructed a training centre which was used to facilitate various forms of training. Upon completion of the project, the centre will remain, to serve as a local Hospice facility. The laboratory building which was also erected upon commencement of the project, upon completion, the building will revert to the care of the Tribal Council.

MEC Raymond Elisha said, "This road in particular is an eye opener for government not to wait for protests before we can act. That is why as a department we went on a road show and had road summits to engage with communities and all stakeholders on prioritisation of roads in districts."

“ We do not want to develop skills that will lie shallow and redundant, and we cannot always have emerging contractors. It is important to enhance relationships and properly manage the processes of sustainability,” concluded

In the meantime, the team led by the Acting Head of Department, Sam Thobakgale, undertook a second visit to Ratjiepan road in Moretele district. The R19m road project, which is about 4.7kilometres, was constructed by Tshenolo Resources. The project commenced in December 2011 and though the practical completion was done in February this year, the road has been opened for traffic since December 2012.

The contract opened job opportunities to many unemployed people from the surrounding communities, which included youth. Representing the community, Counselor Onicca Moraka said they are very happy with the road which connects a few villages.

“ The main challenge is the storm water drainage system which might cause early deterioration on the newly constructed road” emphasised Moraka.

Thobakgale also indicated that the interest of the department is not just to spend, but to provide quality services and uplift the communities.

“ We want to have quality roads which must last and be of benefit to the development of communities using them,” said Thobakgale.

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Contact Person: **KJ Lebo Mokgethi**

Contact Number: (018) 388 4582

E-mail: lmokgethi@nwpg.gov.za