



the dpw

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MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTH WEST DETERMINED TO WIPE OUT THE LEGACY OF APARTHEID INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

The North West Provincial government is determined and committed to wipe out the legacy of apartheid infrastructure planning by improving access to quality public infrastructure, says outgoing Public Works MEC Howard Yawa.

Speaking during the handover and official opening of the R12.8 million Community Health Center in Boitekong outside Rustenburg on Thursday, MEC Yawa said that the Department of Public Works has ensured that it accelerates the delivery of its clinic Building programme and the construction of health facilities in order to improve access for people in formerly marginalised and rural communities.

"For decades, successive apartheid and homeland governments denied the people of Boitekong and surrounding areas including Sondela, Mereting, Paardekraal and Freedompark access to services to improve the quality of their lives. Today's function is a celebration of the triumph of our people against deprivation, exclusion and marginalisation. It's a celebration of the restoration of dignity to our people and a celebration of the People's Contract for a better life for All. It's a celebration of a partnership that recognises that conflicts delay development in our communities," said MEC Yawa.

In appreciating cooperation and patience of the community, MEC Yawa said "We salute the community of Boitekong for believing in us as government. We salute you for recognising that yesterday was worse, today things are much better but tomorrow things would be a lot better."

The facility is to bring relief to the local community and surrounding areas, which had struggled with the availability of adequate health care services, as the local clinic could not meet all their needs.

The clinic is only open during weekdays from 7 o'clock in the morning to 4 o'clock in the afternoon, meaning that residents who needed medical attention outside these operating periods could not get help. The new health centre is set to bring this to an end.

However the new centre is to bring this to an end because, unlike the clinic, the facility will operate 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, with a broad range of primary health care services including professional nursing, midwifery and emergency medical care on offer.

Although the event marked the official opening of the centre, the facility has been operating since the beginning of April and has already registered major successes in improving the lives of locals. To date, about 4800 patients have received services at the center and about 107 babies have been delivered by the midwifery section.

Forty-five year-old Collina Nongauza of Boitekong, who has had her fair share of the struggles caused by the lack of adequate and convenient health care services joined many other locals in welcoming the new centre.

"My daughter used to go for regular treatments after undergoing a serious operation and it was hard for me to afford taxi fare to and fro the nearest clinic as I'm unemployed," said the mother of two.

"I'm now relieved that the new center is always open and it is within my locality, which means I can access health care services anytime and it won't cost a cent."

The facility boasts a mental health unit, a dentistry unit, a maternal health unit, ward facilities, out patient department, emergency facilities, administration block and an access road.

The event marked MEC Yawa's last official duty in the Public Works portfolio as he assumed office as the MEC for Developmental Local Government and Housing as from Friday 1 June 2007

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