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Department of Public Works
North West Provincial Government
Republic of South Africa

Izimbizo not just “talk shops”

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North West Premier Edna Molewa has assured the public that the provincial government departments would look into the concerns raised during the Imbizo Week.

The provincial government held a series of Izimbizo from October 19 to 28, 2007 in all four regions of the province.

An imbizo is a forum where there is an unmediated interaction between government and the people.

During such an interaction, people get a chance to highlight their concerns, grievances about the service delivery by government.

This helps highlight particular problems needing attention, blockages in implementation of policy, or policy areas that may need review.

Issues relating to the Public Works department, which were raised by members of the public included, among other things:

- Lack of information on the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP);
- Dilapidated school buildings;
- Joblessness among young people;
- Nepotism in the employment of labourers in the department’s construction projects; and
- Construction tenders that benefit few people.

Addressing the people at the events, Premier Molewa re-assured the masses that government’s Imbizo Programme was not just a “talk shop.”

She emphasized that all concerns raised would receive the attention they deserve from the relevant departments.

However, Molewa urged communities to blow the whistle on such corrupt practices as nepotism when they observe it.

“You need to speak up and point those who hire their own families so that the matter can be attended to. Do not just wait for an Imbizo to report such things,” she said, adding that people must also bring evidence to substantiate their claims.

On high unemployment rates among young people, the Premier urged the youth to familiarize themselves with government programmes such as EPWP and the National Youth Service (NYS) which aim to create jobs and develop skills.

Issued by Communication Directorate
Contact Person: **Matshube Mfoloe**
Contact Number: (018) 387 2447 / 0823054594
E-mail: mmfoloe@nwpg.gov.za

