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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](http://www.nwpg.gov.za/public_works)

## WOMEN AND VETERANS TO BENEFIT FROM ROAD PROJECTS...

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Women, youth and former liberation movement and former homelands soldiers are set to benefit from the department's road projects to be undertaken during the current financial year. This was announced by MEC Raymond Elisha during the District Road Summit held in Mahikeng on Monday, 08 October 2012.

"We have a situation where former freedom fighters and trained soldiers from uMkhonto Wesizwe, Azanian People's Liberation Army as well as former soldiers of the Transkei, Venda, Bophuthatswana and Ciskei states are unemployed. They were part of the fight for economic freedom and yet a majority of them are not enjoying that freedom," MEC Elisha said.

He added that most of those soldiers were trained guerillas and were never even properly reintegrated into society upon their return from exile. He described this situation as a ticking time bomb as these soldiers might feel 'cheated' out in the economy they fought for and might take up arms to claim what they may deem as rightfully theirs.

The MEC said women were in the majority as far as the country's population was concerned and were previously oppressed and should therefore be economically uplifted. "We have also 55% of the country being youth and majority of them are unemployed. They therefore resort to negative habits such as drugs and alcohol abuse," the MEC said. He described this as an indication that government needs to come up with programmes that will ensure that youth are registered as viable cooperatives that will allow them to contribute positively as future leaders.

The MEC indicated that all these groups will be given first preference as subcontractors during the roll-out of road maintenance and other projects in the current financial year. "We will inform winning contractors as part of our requirements that these groups be given first preference in as far as subcontracting is concerned," MEC Elisha said

Meanwhile, he MEC announced that four roads in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District were among the more than 20 that were transferred to the South African Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) for rehabilitation and maintenance. These are the Lichtenburg to Ottoshoop, Lichtenburg to Biesiesvlei, Zeerust to Kopfontein (Gaborone Border post) and the Lichtenburg to Coligny roads.