

Policy and Budget Speech delivered by Premier DD Mabuza at the Mpumalanga Legislature

21 May 2013

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker
Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature
Honourable Members of the National Parliament
Honourable Members of the Executive Council
Revered Members of the House of Traditional Leaders
Representatives of business, labour and community –based organisations
Our special guests Make Qwelane recipient of the Order of Baobab 2013, Make Yende recipient of the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver, Make Nomhlanga Mkhize ANC veteran
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
Sanibonani

The Mandate

Honourable Speaker, the plight of our people is always close to the heart of the Ruling Party.

We are a Party that truly cares, listens and acts on the wishes of its citizens.

Our track record since 1912 to date, speaks for itself.

Not long ago, our people gave us a fresh mandate to deliver on the 2009 ANC Manifesto priorities.

Honourable Speaker and Members, as a Party that always takes its mandate and responsibilities very seriously, we never wasted time but placed our hands on deck.

As the Office of the Premier, right at the beginning of the term, we made our intentions very clear and unambiguous.

We identified a set of levers that the Office will be utilising henceforth in ensuring that government remain focus on the work at hand – work to translate the Manifesto priorities into reality.

To refresh memories of Members, one refers to issues such as, *inter alia*:

Macro planning and Policy development;
Performance Measuring, Monitoring and Evaluation;
Integrated Security Management;
Public participation; and
Streamlining of target groups with departmental activities

Honourable Speaker, these have been, and still are, our areas of focus as an Office since the inception of this new administration in 2009.

All our previous Budgets in the years that we have passed through, including the one that we will be tabling before this august House today, were responding and continue to focus on these key areas of work.

As a matter of principle, in each year, we accounted for the Budget which this House appropriated to the Office and also outlined the priorities on which we will be expending the Budget for the next financial year.

Today we have appeared before this august House to uphold this fundamental principle which, in actual fact, happens to be one of the cornerstones of our Constitution.

Progress to date and 2013/14 priorities

Planning and Policy Development

Having said that Honourable Speaker, allow me therefore, to reflect on the performance of the Office in the previous financial year and also highlight some of the priorities that we have set for ourselves to pursue in 2013/14 financial year.

As the Office of the Premier, we continue to ensure that the entire Provincial Administration remains alive and focused on the delivery of the Manifesto priorities.

To this end, we continue to be central in the coordination of macro planning and the development of provincial policies – an activity which has been going from strength to strength in each year since the beginning of this new term to date.

Relating to planning, the Office has made reasonable progress on the three key issues that we have already outlined in our previous Policy and Budget Speeches.

This includes vision 2030; the Provincial Economic Growth and Development Path and the Provincial Five-year Plan.

In 2012/13, we committed ourselves:

To review the Provincial and Development Strategy with a view of initiating the development of the Mpumalanga vision 2030. We promised to complete this work in December 2012.

Honourable Speaker, the process of developing the Provincial Strategic Implementation Framework for vision 2030, of which, is a direct implementation response to vision 2030, is unfolding very well.

As we are all aware, this is a framework that seeks to present and affirm the Province's approach towards realising the adopted and articulated national vision and development plan.

It is a framework that will guide continuous planning across all levels of government.

In essence, it is framework that will inform various sector plans, the Medium-Term Strategic Framework, Annual Plans of Departments, including Integrated Development Plans of districts and municipalities on continuous basis.

Honourable Speaker, I must point out that the Office failed to meet the target of December 2012 with regard to the finalisation of the Provincial Strategic Implementation Framework for vision 2030 due to delays experienced in one of the pillars of the framework, that is, the completion of the Provincial Spatial Development Perspective.

However, we are currently wrapping up that work and the final draft will be presented to Cabinet in June 2013 for consideration.

With regard to the Mpumalanga Economic Growth and Development Path, we committed ourselves:

To finalise the Programme of Action that will drive the Implementation Process of the Growth Path. And this work was meant to be concluded during the course of the 2012/13 financial year.

Honourable Speaker and Members, I am pleased to announce that we have managed to meet the target as set.

The Programme of Action is in place and being rolled out.

It is a POA that hinges on four pillars for a start and will be developed further over time. The pillars involve:

- Human capital development;
- Infrastructure development;
- Rural development and
- The expansion of production

Flowing from these pillars, we have identified five key areas of immediate intervention, namely:

- Skills development but focusing on scarce skills required by the economy, including the improvement of Maths, Science and Technology for both educators and learners;
- Urban renewal;
- Enterprise development;
- Sustainable environment; and
- Research and development.

Honourable Speaker, these are areas of intervention that underpin our partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders.

All the Memoranda of understanding that we have signed are guided by these areas of intervention.

Over and above this work, as we pointed out in the recent State of the Province Address, we have identified fifteen high impact projects as part of driving the Growth Path and these projects are at different levels of implementation.

Therefore, in 2013/14 financial year, the Office will continue to coordinate the signing of new MOUs and monitor the implementation of those that have been signed already.

This takes to the Provincial Five-Year Plan whose primary aim is to articulate programmes and outputs of the nationally agreed outcomes, including priorities emanating from our provincial policy imperatives.

What is worth noting is this plan:

Informs the Performance Agreements of Members of the Executive Committee;
It is a living document; and
Is being reviewed annually to accommodate changes should there be any.

Similarly to the previous years, the Office will continue to review this Plan even in this current financial year. This also includes conducting review of Annual Plans of all the Departments for the next financial year.

Research and Information Management

As far as Research and Information Management is concerned, in 2012/13 financial year, we committed ourselves to pursue four critical issues in this area of work. This involves:

The establishment of a central hub for credible planning, development and performance information;
Strengthening collaboration and partnerships with institutions and different lead Departments across a range of the research field;
Finalising the knowledge and information management framework; and
The recruitment of personnel with the requisite skills to strengthen our capacity as an Office – capacity that will position us better as we discharge our responsibility of providing a strategic direction to the entire Administration.

Honourable Speaker, one must admit that, overall, we did not perform very well in this area of work.

This could be attributed, mainly, to our snail-pace in reorganising ourselves to align with the new key performance areas and also the recruitment of personnel with requisite skills.

With the recent appointment of the new Director-General and some senior managers, I am convinced that we will be able to realise these targets in the 2013/14 financial year.

We are going to work very hard towards building a formidable research branch in the Office because this activity is core in our strategic leadership role that we play within Administration.

Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Honourable Speaker and Members, another important area of our work is performance monitoring and evaluation.

We continue to ensure that the performance of the different Departments is measured, monitored and evaluated accordingly.

We must really commend the new administration for the introduction of this new approach.

In the few years that we have traversed, we can already tell the difference.

Slowly but surely, we are starting to observe the various Departments and the three spheres of government, tilting towards an integrated approach in the delivery of services to our people.

This exercise not only enhances performance measurement, but also strengthens the element of accountability and further improving the impact of government services on the lives of our people.

Honourable Speaker, for us to continue deepening the approach of performance monitoring and evaluation assessment within the entire administration, in 2012/13 financial year, we committed ourselves to institutionalise the performance monitoring and evaluation assessment tools for the three identified areas, namely:

The Programme of Action which covers the Delivery Agreement signed by the President and his Ministers, and between the Premier and his Members;

The Management Performance Assessment Tool, (MPAT in short), which is focusing primarily on the performance of government departments in the areas of financial management, strategic management, Human Resource and systems management; and

The Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring Programme – a tool meant to monitor and evaluate frontline service delivery.

We also committed ourselves to capacitate Departments and municipalities on these three tools.

Honourable Speaker and Members, the process of institutionalising these tools is not completed as yet due to inadequate human capital.

The current staff is thinly spread among the different broad programmes that are run by this branch.

Despite this shortage of personnel, the Office, jointly with Presidency continued to implement these tools within the Administration.

During course of the year under review, 12 Departments completed self-assessment exercise, using the Management Performance Assessment Tool, and we are expecting the outcome before the end of June this year.

Through the Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring Tool, 34 public institutions were visited and 30 were provided with feedbacks about their performance.

Together with the involved institutions, we developed improvement plans in those areas of weaknesses picked up by the assessment report. And as an Office, we will continue to monitor as whether those improvement plans are being executed.

Honourable Speaker, as part of improving the culture of performance and accountability, the Office conducted assurance performance and computer audits to five cluster Departments.

As part of driving the policy imperative of 'Clean Audit' by all departments of government in 2014, we also tracked progress relating to the implementation of audit findings in respect of both financial and predetermined performance information.

Honourable Speaker, despite these challenges that we have experienced in 2012/13 financial year, we will still pursue our target of institutionalising the Monitoring Tools in 2013/14 financial year.

Basically, we are earmarking to implement a computerised Monitoring and Evaluation system.

Coupled with this exercise, we will also be continuing to roll out the capacity building programmes to all Departments and municipalities.

Target Groups

Honourable Speaker, let me reiterate my opening statement wherein I asserted that we are a government that cares for its people, particularly the poor and the vulnerable.

We are a government that advocates the protection and advancement of the rights of children, women, youth and people with disabilities.

In my previous Policy and Budget Speech I argued that:

“Our understanding is that, for these groups to grow and reach the first rung of the development ladder, government has to dedicate efforts on skills development, financial support, job creation and the development of cooperatives”.

I also continued and asserted that:

“Of critical importance, we intend to see Departments realigning and streamlining their programmes to accommodate the needs of the targeted groups”.

It is in this context that in 2012/13 financial year, we as an Office, committed ourselves:

To exercise oversight and coordinate programmes aimed at advancing the plight of the vulnerable groups across all spheres of government;

To elevate the pandemic of HIV and AIDs on the agenda of government because of its threatening prevalence in the Province.

To this end we said the Honourable Premier will take lead and chair the provincial AIDs Council; and

To ensure that Monitoring and Evaluation of HIV and AIDs programmes is strengthened.

Honourable Speaker and Members, I am pleased to announce that, as an Office, we are making progress in all of these areas of work.

We are ensuring that most of the strategies and programmes of Departments factor in activities dedicated to the target groups, particularly programmes geared towards rural development.

I believe that the MECs will elaborate in their Policy and Budget speeches when appearing before this House.

We are also ensuring that all the Memoranda of Understanding that we are concluding with the private sector accommodate the issues of the target groups.

With regard to HIV and AIDs activities, the office continues to coordinate the programmes of Departments aimed at responding to the challenges of this pandemic.

Let me also quickly point out that the Premier is definitely chairing the provincial Aids Council.

In 2013/14 financial year, the Office will:

Establish a dedicated Youth unit that will coordinate and foster Youth development;

Establish a Rapid Implementation Unit whose primary task would be to coordinate the acceleration of service delivery on selected areas of intervention.

This involves, *inter alia*, areas such as the backlog in housing, water storm damaged infrastructure and the minor maintenance of hospitals;

Strengthen the Mpumalanga Aids Council so that this body is able to coordinate and mobilise stakeholders in reversing the negative impact of HIV and Aids on the lives of our people and also respond directly to the issues raised in the 2013 State of the Province Address;

Continue to monitor and evaluate programmes of Departments with a view of ensuring that the issues of the target groups are also prioritised in their daily activities.

Honourable Speaker, let me take this opportunity to extend my condolences to the families of all the children who passed on in the different initiation schools.

As government, we will come closer to this space and work together with all the Parties involved so that we can curb the recurrence of such incidences in future.

Government Communication

Honourable Speaker and Members, the Office of the Premier is also responsible for communicating government work to the public in general.

To this end, we are continuing to ensure that the objectives of the Provincial Government Communication Framework are realised as promised in the 2012/13 financial year.

Among others, we are continuing to intensify government's utilisation of both the print and electronic media to keep the public on board about the daily activities of government.

The Executive Council is continuing to conduct outreach programmes.

As we pointed out before, we are not only interacting with the masses but also intervene on dire situations that require urgent attention. We build houses for the aged, child-headed households and people with disabilities.

Through the 'Kancane Kancane Intervention', I am also drawing in the private sector to assist in complementing the work of Cabinet. **To date we have built over 150 'upmarket' houses.**

Honourable Speaker and Members, the Office has reviewed the issue of the establishment of the Provincial Call Centre and came to the conclusion that this idea should be deferred until such time a viable funding option has been worked out.

However, we are still utilising the Presidential Hotline to interact with the public about issues of their concern.

As far as the Provincial Communication Summit that we promised to convene is concerned, we have also reviewed this activity and decided to discard such an intention.

Instead, we will be employing the platform provided by the Provincial Government Communication Framework to pursue the same objectives.

Honourable Speaker and Members, in 2013/14 financial year:

We will continue to intensify the implementation of the Provincial Government Communication Framework; and
Coordinate the rebranding and repositioning of the Province.

As government, we still believe that our corporate image is not appealing at all.

For example, currently each Department is using its own letterhead, its own colours and its own uniform for cleaners. This does not represent one Provincial Government with different Departments.

Therefore, this has to change. We have to assume a posture of one Mpumalanga Provincial Government.

Integrated Security Management

Coming to the issue of the Integrated Security Management, in 2012/13 financial year, we committed ourselves:

To ensure the implementation of the Provincial Integrated Security Management Framework, starting by developing an Implementation Plan and the establishment of an internal Vetting Field Unit to vet all officials as directed by Cabinet and the relevant prescripts.

To this end, I must submit to the House that we did not move as fast as we would have wished to.

To date, we have managed to get seven officials trained as Vetting Investigation officers; however, they have not started to discharge their responsibility fully as yet due to some minor administrative glitches which the Office is almost complete in resolving.

In the upcoming financial year, we will definitely accelerate our performance in this area of work. We will also facilitate compliance to the National Key Points Act, of which, is not the case at this juncture. Priority will be given to the government complex.

Fraud and Corruption

Honourable Speaker and Members, the Office is also responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Anti-corruption Strategy.

Cabinet has approved the nominations for the Anti-Corruption Council, however, the Council has not been formally launched to the public.

In 2012/13 financial year, the Office has received 212 cases of alleged fraud and corruption. Of these cases, 99 cases were investigated and concluded.

We could not investigate all the cases in time due limited personnel. However, we are in a process of ensuring that all vacant posts are filled in the Office. This will assist us in fast-tracking the investigation of the reported cases.

In addition, we have also trained 40 officials in five Departments on Anti-Corruption initiatives.

Now, in 2013/14 financial year, we commit ourselves:

To launch the Provincial Anti-corruption Council officially, including its regional and local structures;

To develop the Fraud Prevention Plan;

To intensify Anti-corruption Awareness Campaigns and training of more government officials on Anti-corruption initiatives;

Honourable Speaker, in the light of the responsibilities that I have clearly articulated and outlined, I therefore request this august House to approve the 2013/14 budget of Two Hundred Million Four Hundred and Ninty Two Rand R200,492,000.00

This Budget will enable the three programmes in the Office to deliver on the priorities which I have outlined throughout my input.

As I conclude, Honourable Speaker and Members, let me take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to the Members of the legislature and the Executive Council for their unqualified support and proper guidance.

I would also wish to thank the new Director-General, Dr Mkhize, all senior officials and staff members for doing their best in making the Office of the Premier a strategic centre for excellence. Let us keep up the good work and make sure that we defend our status of clean audit.

To all our strategic partners and stakeholders, thank very much for joining us in this difficult journey of creating a better life for all. Your contributions are always welcomed.

Let us conquer fear and allow hope to triumph.

I Thank You