



agriculture, rural development,  
land & environmental affairs

**MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



2019/20

## POLICY & BUDGET SPEECH





Hon. VR Shongwe



**2019/2020 POLICY AND BUDGET VOTE No. 5 BY MEC FOR AGRICULTURE, RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT, LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, HON. VR SHONGWE (MPL)  
11 JULY 2019**

**Honourable Speaker**

**Deputy Speaker and Chief Whip of the Majority Party;**

**Honourable Premier, Mrs Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane;**

**Honourable Members of the Executive Council;**

**Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature;**

**Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Hon. TM Makaringe**

**Executive Mayors: District and Local Municipalities**

**The Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders and Traditional Leaders present;**

**The Acting Director-General, Mr KM Mohlasedi;**

**The Acting HOD for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental  
Affairs**

**, Mr LS Monareng; and Other Head of Departments;**

**African National Congress Acting Provincial Chairperson, Mr M Ndlovu and the rest of the  
Leadership;**

**Representatives from Organised Agriculture;**

**Representatives from the Business Community;**

**Representatives of Labour Federations;**

**Distinguished Guests and Members of the Public;**

**Members of the Media;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

**Madam Speaker,**

Mpumalanga Province is mainly rural and dependent to a large extent on agricultural sector which is one of top three economic drivers after mining and utilities.

The Mpumalanga Sector showed a steady increase towards its contribution to the national Growth Domestic Product (GDP) of about 8.1% between 2014 and 2017 according to SERO report dated June 2019.

This contribution is despite socio economic factors such as:

- High agricultural input costs
- Uncertainty on land expropriation without compensation
- Low levels of reinvestments on the farms
- Land invasion of high prime arable land
- Limited access to viable markets
- Aging farming community and low levels of literacy

During her State of the Province Address beginning of the month of July this year, the Honourable Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane raised key programmes for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs that the Province has set itself to radically bring about a sustainable and radical land reform and I will outline some of the key programmes and how they will benefit our people.

## **Government Nutrition Programme (GNP)**

**Madam Speaker and Members,**

The Honourable Premier in her State of the Province Address has announced that the Government Nutrition Programme (GNP) is brought back to the Department, we are delighted as a Department responsible for food security in this Province.

The announcement will assist us in streamlining our activities that we are taking part including the production inputs, extension services, ploughing and supply to markets. The whole value chain will be in control of the Department.

In order to accelerate access to markets by farmers, the Department through the Government Nutrition Programme will be supplying produce to the following Departments: Education (schools), Health (hospitals), Safety Security and Liaison (Training College) and Correctional Services (prisons).





## **Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)**

**Madam Speaker,**

We are delighted again that the **Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)** is allocated back to the Department for coordination.

This programme will bring back the much **anticipated integrated planning** that is important to develop our rural communities.

The Department together with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform will urgently start with planning to bring back the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) to its full implementation mode again.

In the next few weeks the Department working with all stakeholders will develop a **costed implementation plan** which will see all re-identification of poverty stricken municipalities which will be hailed as CRDP Municipalities.

**An all-inclusive multi stakeholder business plan** will be a priority to ensure that we start implementing without delay.

**Sustainable and Radical Agrarian Reform**

**Honourable Speaker and Members,**

Primary Agricultural production remains one of the key priorities used to curb the effect of food insecurity, poverty, unemployment and inequality.

Thus, the Department has developed and is currently implementing a number of programmes in order to increase primary agricultural production and value addition.

## **Land Audit**

A decision has also been taken and directed to the Department to compile a register of all leased farms in collaboration with Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) indicating the total number of operational and non-operational farms in the Province.

This exercise will assist in the distribution of non-operational farms to women and youth to address the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

## **Water Indaba**

Due to insufficient access to water for farmers, the Department is planning to host a multi stakeholder **Water Indaba**.

From this Indaba the Department hopes to address access to water and water conservation methods in the farming activities.





Madam Speaker,

The following are some of the key Programmes that the Department will be implementing:

## PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Honourable Speaker,

As part of the contribution towards developing our emerging and small-scale farmers, we will strengthen and increase support to our farmers to enable them to increase their production levels to satisfy the ever-increasing pressures of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

### Agricultural Master Plan

To turn around the Agricultural Sector, the Department has set itself to develop Mpumalanga Agricultural Master Plan.

This plan intends to increase the level of **integrated coordination and implementation with all the stakeholders** in the sector, in line with Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 of 2013.

## Phezukomkhono Mlimi Programme

This is one of our flagship programmes that has brought about much relief to our farmers and more so to our historically marginalised communities.

Our target in this financial year is to continue providing direct support through the provision of mechanisation services and production inputs by planting of **12 060 ha**, support **726** food gardens as well as **80** Primary Cooperatives linked to markets including the GNP.





Added to this, I am proud to announce that the Department **innovatively** introduced and piloted a new sub-programme of planting **fruit and nuts trees in each household**, called **Zonda Indlala Programme (ZIP)**.

The programme is aimed to reach all levels of production that includes the backyard household level, and both emerging and commercial farmers. This will see our farmers participating in agro-processing opportunities such as fruit drying, atchaar, juice and jam processing.

Further to that, this programme will address the multifaceted challenges of land unavailability, food insecurity, carbon emission, high levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

**Madam Speaker,**

The Zonda Indlala Programme will contribute to our commitment made in the Ruling Party's Election Manifesto, that this Government will, and I quote: ***“Ensure that no land is wasted or underutilised through enacting and implementing measures to promote urban agriculture and community food gardens to provide national food security and reduce hunger”***, close quote.

**Masibuyele Esibayeni**

**Madam Speaker,**

Through the Masibuyele Esibayeni Programme, the Department will continue with support of livestock to farmers. The Department will continue supplying and delivery to farmers 14 sets of livestock. They will be spread as follows: **2 sets** of cattle (bull and heifer), **6 sets** of goats (buck and doe), **1 set** of sheep (ram and ewe), **5 sets** of pigs (boar and sow).

## **Dairy Production Plant**

In this financial year the Department will take advantage of introducing our farmers into highly contested sector of dairy production.

The Department has thus increased its focus area on assisting Dairy Farmers to increase their production level over the MTSF period. These farmers will supply their milk to much anticipated **Dairy Production Plant** to be constructed in the City of Mbombela.

The dairy plant will benefit the local traders and surrounding households, who will no longer travel long distances to acquire fresh dairy products. This will also trigger unlimited spin-offs such as logistics and indirect jobs.

## **AGRI-HUBS**

**Madam Speaker,**

The Honourable Premier, has committed us to ensuring that the Sector continues to increase its contribution to export earnings. The next five years will see a continued provision of a comprehensive support to the three established Agri-Hubs that is the **Mkhuhlu, Mkhondo and the Dr JS Moroka Agri-Hubs**. These hubs will open up the much needed export market to the farmers' produce.



To date, I am proud to announce that the **Mkhuhlu Agri-Hub** is already operational. This financial year the Department will see Mkhondo and Dr JS Moroka Agri-Hubs coming into operation.

These Agri-Hubs will bring much-needed agro-processing facilities at the doorsteps of our farmers, who will supply their produce directly to the Agri-Hubs, thereby eliminating potential middle-man and unnecessary high transport costs.

This will open opportunities of value adding and storage to reduce the wastage they have always suffered from, and create economic spin-offs for economic development.

Already the Province has entered into mutual agreements with countries such as Mozambique, Angola, Oman, and Russia.

## **MPUMALANGA YOUNG FARMER INCUBATION PROGRAMME (FORTUNE 40)**

**Honourable Speaker,**

I must say that the Mpumalanga Young Farmer Incubation Programme has already attracted a lot of interest and appreciation from the youth in the Province.

Therefore, we continue to receive requests from the youth who are eager to venture into Fortune 40, and to us, this is an indication of a positive impact of programme provides to the youth of this Province.

The Department in this financial year will continue to roll out this programme and ensure that these Fortune 40 farms are fully operational, sustainable and linked to local, national and international markets, including Government Nutrition Programme (GNP) and Agri-Hubs.

The Department will over the MTSF period place the incubated youth from this programme on identified land from the various sources like the unused and underutilised state land, private land such as the Partnership Model with SASOL and others.

The Department targets to reach a **total 35 new farms** over this period.

## **YOUNG TRACTOR MECHANIC**

**Madam Speaker and Honourable Members,**

Another innovative programme that specifically focuses on the youth development is the Young Tractor Mechanic Programme.

This programme has already started seeing **80 Young Mechanic** applying their mechanical skills on some of the Departmental tractors and also to some of the farmers.

The Department in this current financial year will rollout this in-house accredited tractor mechanic programme to other Municipalities targeting **160 young mechanics over the MTSF period.**

This will also improve on the tractor maintenance and repairs and reduction in the costs involved faced by the Department.



## UNEMPLOYED YOUNG AGRICULTURAL GRADUATES

The Department will continue to implement the programmes that aims to curb the high rate of unemployment of young agricultural graduates.

Amongst others, the Department in conjunction with Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, has a **Graduate Placement Programme on Land Reform farms**. This programme will benefit both the graduates in gaining experience and the farmer on the new technologies of farm management.

The Department also provides newly graduated Veterinarians with the **Community Service Veterinary Programme** in partnership with our then sister Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

This programme provides opportunities for these University Graduates to do their community service in most rural areas of the Province to ensure all communities receive veterinary services in an equitable manner.

### Internship Programme

The Department continues to place the non-agricultural graduates on the Internship Programme. This will benefit a number of graduate with various skills in the workplace.

## RESEARCH AND TRAINING

**Madam Speaker,**

The Department continues **to invest in Agricultural Research, Climate Smart Technologies and Training of farmers to enhance the sector's market share in global trade.**

Work has started to bring back **Athole Research Farm** into full operation, and reintroduce its agricultural and research services.

We will continue this year to focus on refurbishing Athole Research Farm, developing fodder banks and re-establishing breeding stock.

The Department will also focus on concluding the second phase of refurbishment of former **Elijah Mango College of Education** as a Farmer Training Centre.

Together with the revamped **Marapyane Farmer Training Centre**, these two centres will contribute to the agricultural sector by providing training of farmers in key agricultural commodities.

In this financial year, **6 800 farmers** will be trained on various agricultural skills and **1 110 young farmers** will also be trained through the National Skills Fund.

## VETERINARY SERVICES

**Honourable Speaker and Members,**

Animal disease control remains a critical role that the Department plays to ensure the economy of the country grows as planned.

To ensure the biosecurity of the **cloven-hoofed** animals in the Province, the Department will intensify vaccination of cattle in designated areas (vaccination zones) for **Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)**, one of the most economic sensitive diseases affecting the Province.

The recent FMD disease outbreak that was reported in Limpopo in January this year, also had a negative impact on the economy of our Province for a moment as we are neighbours. Export prohibitions in this regard hit our farmers hard and consequently it impacted negatively on the Provincial economy.

The Department will continue **to combat illegal meat** derived from places other than abattoirs that may pose a threat to the health of the citizens through the implementation of the Independent Meat Inspection Scheme. Mpumalanga is one of the few Provinces that were first compliant to the scheme.



## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

**Honourable Speaker,**

The **Provincial Service Delivery Environment Charter/Model** is mainly influenced by trending global environmental threats such as Climate Change; land degradation and ecosystem including water quality and quantity.

Climate Change impact result in declining land productivity on food security and the global responses driven by a changing world order focusing on international economic competitiveness and collapse of multilateralism.

The Department will develop a Greenhouse Inventory to monitor greenhouse gases from facilities and industries in compliance with National Climate Change response policy.

To date, the Department has innovatively developed a programme called **Zonda Insila Programme (ZIP)**, which aims at enhancing and increasing the knowledge of good waste management principles in communities and reduction of Climate Change impact.

The launch of the **Zonda Insila Programme follows President Cyril Ramaphosa's National Good Green Deeds** campaign launched in March this year which aims at a safer and cleaner South Africa, encouraging new patterns of behaviour towards waste management issues.

The programme will encourage communities to clean their surroundings and collect waste for recycling.

**Honourable Speaker,** this programme has already seen a number of young people being employed as **ambassadors of clean environment in their local areas** across the Province.

ZIP has also started providing our communities with various recycling opportunities that have seen the intervention turned into environmentally based businesses.

This includes enterprises such as **Abundance of Joy and Vuyanikuhle in Mbombela**. In **Bushbuckridge** we have **Sikoxweni** and **Mandela Recycling Groups**; **Injinga** and **Bophelo** in **Msukaligwa**; **Aburi** in **Nkangala** and **Elahleni Recyclers** in **Emalahleni**. In the next five years, we must have increased the rate of recycled waste by 40%.



**Honourable Speaker and Members,**

The Province as the leader in the energy generation, is in the forefront in the reduction of air pollution due to mining and industrialisation. In this regard, we plan to increase the efficiency of the **five Air Quality Monitoring Stations by 20%** in the high priority areas of Nkangala and Gert Sibande Districts respectively in the next MTSF period.

The Department will continue to enforce Environmental Legislations in protection of the environment through the Environmental Inspectorate (Green Scorpions). We all deserve to live in an environment that is safe and clean for our wellbeing. The focus will further include education, awareness campaigns and job creation.

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS**

**Honourable Speaker and Members,**

In her State of the Province Address, the Honourable Premier also stated the commitment of the Provincial Government to work closely with the **University of Mpumalanga to advance our agricultural development agenda.**

The Department will ensure that there are formalised programmes with the University of Mpumalanga which include but not limited to Extension and Advisory collaboration, placement of students for experimental learning, research and soil analysis.

Database of the state leased land has been developed already and unutilised land will be made available for those who completed their agricultural studies to pursue their farming passion.

The Department will achieve most of its target and mandates through **collaborating with House of the Traditional Leaders, Organised Agriculture, Commodity Associations and other farmer structures such as Youth and Women in Agriculture (YARD and WARD).**

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, let me quote the words of the late Statesman Dr Nelson Mandela in his famous book **Long Walk to Freedom**, open quote ***“The future is for those who believe in the beauty of their dreams”***, close quotes. The Premier has clearly laid out the future of the Province and the Department will focus on implementation, implementation and implementation...

I would therefore like to thank our Honourable Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane, and Members of the Executive Council for their guidance and support.

Let me also express my appreciation to the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, under the leadership of its Chairperson, Honourable TM Makaringe.

The team in my Department, led by the Acting Head Mr Lucky Monareng, thank you for the support and commitment and also to our external stakeholders, organized agriculture and farmers; let us continue working together to support our farmers.

My appreciation also goes to the African National Congress study Group under the leadership of the Chief Whip, Honourable FV Mlombo for the guidance and support they have given us.

And lastly, I want to thank my family, my wife in particular, for the reliable support I receive.

**I hereby wish to present the Vote to this august House to approve the 2019/20 financial year budget, which is allocated in nine programmes as follows:**

**Programme 1: Administration: R 201 013 million**

**Programme 2: Sustainable Resource Management:  
R 77 339 million**

**Programme 3: Farmer Support and Development Services: R 538 250 million**

**Programme 4: Veterinary Services: R 144 640 million**

**Programme 5: Technology, Research, and Development: R 61 611 million**

**Programme 6: Agriculture Economics: R 18 049 million**

**Programme 7: Structured Agriculture Training:  
R 28 782 million**

**Programme 8: Rural Development: R 26 016 million**

**Programme 9: Environmental Affairs an amount of  
R 126 773 million**

**The total Budget for approval is R 1,222,473,000 (One billion, two hundred and twenty two million, and four hundred and seventy three thousand rand)**

This budget will enable us to deliver on the plans of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs as outlined above.

