

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PREMIER HON MANDLA NDLOVU
ON THE OCCASION OF THE PROVINCIAL WOMEN'S DAY
CELEBRATIONS, HELD AT SYDNEY CHOMA BANQUET
HALL, STEVE TSHWETE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, 09
AUGUST 2025.**

Programme Director
Hon MECs and MPLs
Executive Mayors and all Councillors
All Officials led by DG Maggie Sikosana
Representative of Women Organisation
Representatives of Political parties
Religious, traditional and community leaders
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
Friends from the Media

**Sanibonai, Molweni, Dumelang, Goeie more, Lotjhani, Avuxeni, Ndi
Matsheloni, Good morning**

**Malibongwe!!!
Igama Lamakhosikazi!!**

1. Programme Director, let me first take this opportunity on behalf of the Government to greet all the women of Mpumalanga and South Africa in this important day.
2. Today we reflect and celebrate the women of our country. 9 August, 2025 today is the 69th anniversary of the 1956 women's march to the Union Buildings in opposition to the pass laws.
3. This year's commemoration takes place under the overarching theme: **"Building Resilient Economies for all."** Which aligns with South Africa's Presidency of the G20 and its commitment to the principles of Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability.

4. In Mpumalanga we have declared that it cannot be business as usual when our Grandmothers, Sisters, Aunts and our Daughters are still subjected to some discrimination or any form of abuse. The fight against gender based violence is something to UNITE all of us.
5. The Government has some strategies to address unemployment which include increased participation in Public Employment Programmes (e.g. EPWP), increased vocational and skills-based training and leveraging on Public Procurement. These interventions have a history of working and they are aimed at tackling the persistent issues of poverty, unemployment and income inequality.
6. As the 7th Administration we have seen some significant progress in addressing issues of the youth, people living with disabilities and women. I am glad to announce that Mpumalanga Province is now 2nd best in the country in terms of achievement of job creation targets which is a significant improvement from 7th position that we occupied in the 2019/20 financial year.
7. We have just concluded the budgets of all our departments and key programmes that were implemented and women were beneficiaries. It is in those details that we start to have a sense where we are going and what are the immediate tasks for our government.
8. I am looking forward to the detail simplification of all opportunities available so that we are in the same page in our struggle to fight poverty, unemployment and inequality.

9. There are also opportunities for women owned small, micro and medium sized enterprises to access business opportunities under MEGA's industrial revitalisation programme.

Women Empowerment

10. The province has actively participated in a national event - Women's Trade Fair - "*Empower Market*" to empower women SMMEs in the country. The event was anchored in South Africa's G20 Presidency which include the Empowerment of Women Working Group Key Priority 2: Promoting Financial Inclusion of and for Women.
11. The Women's Trade Fair was hosted under the theme - "*Empower Market*" in collaboration with Standard Bank, Women 20 (W20), G20 Alliance and other private and public sector stakeholders. The aim of the Trade Fair was to bring together leading women and allies across the continent to create visibility for every woman in the continent, including those in the rural areas to know what G20 Presidency means to women.
12. The session was meant to provide women SSMEs with access to information, access to funding and access to markets. The Trade Fair showcased innovation, enterprise and opportunity across key sectors, and reinforcing our shared commitment to inclusive economic growth.
13. The province accorded an opportunity to 12 women representing from the three district municipalities who participated

in the event which was hosted in Gauteng Province in the month of August as a National open event for 2025 Women Month. The women representing the province, managed to showcase their work, networked and were capacitated by different private sectors on business funding and market linkages.

Skills Development and Training

14. Through the Mpumalanga Regional Training Trust (MRTT) we have trained a total of 143 learners in Hospitality, of which 73 % of the learners are women. The entity further trained 552 learners in different technical skills programs of which 75% are women.
15. This entity supported a Non- Profit Organization (NPO) that serve food from Monday to Friday to the needy people (elderly and young), run by a woman at Kanyamazane, called Good Morning Kids Zone.
16. The Department of Public Works Roads and Transport enrolled 350 participants as part of the National Youth Service (NYS) Building Maintenance Programme for a period of 18 months. This intake included a total of 186 women. The allocated budget amounted to R26 million.
17. The Department enrolled a further 250 participants in May 2025 which includes 149 women. The allocated budget for the year amounts to R21 million.

18. We will continue to provide training and mentorship programmes to emerging contractors so that they become future employment creators. Also, biasness will be given to programmes that specifically target women and youth unemployment, such as internship, learner ship and artisan development.
19. The number of interns enrolled is very encouraging even though there is room for improvement.

Women in Renewable Energy and Just Transition

20. The Mpumalanga Provincial Government in partnership with Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency (MGCA) is committed to advancing gender equality and ensuring that women are active participants and beneficiaries in the green economy transition.
21. Through the South Africa Just Jobs for the Future (SAJJOF) Project being implemented on behalf of the African Development Bank, the provincial government is supporting women farmers to adopt sustainable agriculture practices, contributing to food security and climate resilience. The project also enables them to access green value chains and enterprise support. In a focused effort to build capacity among women in the public sector, provincial and local government officials, particularly women will be receiving training to strengthen their role in Just Transition planning and implementation.
22. Additionally, the agency will train 30 women from SAWIMA and NAFCOOC Women in Mining in the province on the principles of

the green economy, Just Transition, and related economic opportunities that will arise through the Just transition.

Women in Procurement

23. The Mpumalanga Provincial Government is committed in supporting women-owned companies through its procurement spending on goods and services in line with applicable procurement laws.
24. The recent one on one engagement with all departments and entities was also an eye opener in terms of better understanding of progress and challenges. We usually say numbers don't lie and it is out of those specifics that made us to even signed some commitments with all departments so as to be able to assess some progress.
25. The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport plays an important role in the transformation agenda. It supports localisation, cooperatives, SMMEs and industrialisation, which are vital for economic growth and job creation. Approximately R2.3 billion worth of contracts were awarded in the 2024/25 financial year of which 99, 6% were awarded to black people, 41% awarded to women owned enterprises.
26. Women Benefited in procurement which has made significant strides in promoting women participation and benefit in its procurement processes, aligning with the Preferential Procurement

Regulations (PPR) 2022, which explicitly include women owned enterprises as a designated target group.

27. 49% of MER's procurement spend for 2024/25 financial year benefited women owned businesses, demonstrating a commitment to inclusive economic participation. This empowerment includes the Miss Mpumalanga sponsorship programme that empowers women across the Province.
28. The Mpumalanga provincial government continues to strengthen its initiatives to empower women to access and register their companies on the Central Supplier Database as follows:
 - Hold bi-annual Provincial meetings of the Forum with target groups (women, youth and people with disabilities) where issues such as opportunities on inclusive economic empowerment are discussed.
 - Going forward more advocacy to be coordinated in support of target groups' businesses for beneficiation from business opportunities.

Sanitary Dignity Programme

29. To keep learners that cannot afford to provide sanitary dignity towels to be at schools and to perform optimal, the province has committed to provide dignity to the learners through the distribution of sanitary towels to quintile 1 schools. In the 2024/25 financial year more than 98 350 learners were supported with sanitary dignity towels and we are committed to support more learners in the current financial year.

Gender Based Violence and Femicide

30. Mpumalanga is not immune to the scourge of Gender Based Violence and Femicide which has been declared as a second pandemic in the country by his Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa President of the Republic of South Africa.
31. The province is committed to mitigate the scourge of Gender Based Violence and Femicide. One commitment among others was the launch of the Provincial Council on Gender Based Violence and Femicide, which aligns and respond to the resolutions of the Presidential GBVF Summit.
32. The Provincial Council on GBVF is a multi-stakeholder structure that serves as an accountability and leadership platform on the implementation of the Provincial Strategic Plan on GBVF. The Provincial Council on GBVF is solely dependent on the functionality of the Rapid Response Teams that were launched in all 20 municipalities of the province.
33. Majority of active participants in the Rapid Respond teams on GBVF are women, who are keen to ending gender-based violence and have free violence societies. We therefore call upon all Executive Mayors to ensure that the Rapid Response Team on GVBVF are functional within their municipalities as they are one of the vehicles that provide swift response on GBVF on the ground.
34. We have witnessed a number of men participating in empowerment activities that are meant to curb GBVF and a number

of men's forums and dialogue have been coordinated with external partners. We therefore edge more men and boys to take part in the fight for gender-based violence and to also show love and compassion to all women and girls so that we all live in harmony and decrease the gruesome killing of our sisters, mothers and children.

35. The Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison is also committed in ensuring safety of women as vulnerable groups who are susceptible to incidences of gender-based violence and femicide. The following initiatives have been implemented:

- Educational Awareness campaigns conducted on Anti rape awareness and assault GBH, GBVF and Human trafficking.
- Child protection week programs have been conducted across the province.
- The Department is the provincial lead agency in the implementation of the Minister of Police 90 Day Plan on the Fight Against Gender Based Violence and Femicide

36. Programme Director, whilst acknowledging that progress has been made but we must not lose sight that we still have some challenges to deal with as a province and the country. Let us continue to fight all the ills in our communities that are undermine the good progress we have made.

37. Let me hasten to also mention that achieving the emancipation of women requires economic empowerment. Women need financial security and independence to have control over their

lives. It is out of that understanding that we placed a priority on investing in women's economic empowerment as I mentioned.

38. We are more than committed to promoting the rights of all women, including women living with disabilities and LGBTQI+ women.

39. Let me conclude by quoting the wise words of Tata Nelson Mandela when he said:

“As long as women are bound by poverty and as long as they are looked down upon, human rights will lack substance.”

40. Let us all work together for equal opportunities and progress for all women.

41. Once again I want to take this opportunity and say, Happy Women's Day to all the beautiful women of Mpumalanga, The place of the Rising Sun our province and South Africa our beloved country.

Thank you very much Programme Director.

Wathinta bafazi

Wathinta imbokodo

Uzakufa