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Agriculture, Rural Development,
Land and Environmental Affairs
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**Kubhunya Lutfuli, Kusephuka
Tidzindzi, Sibuyela Emasimini!!!**

2014/15 POLICY & **BUDGET SPEECH**



Building 6,
No 7 Government Boulevard,
Riverside Park,
Nelspruit 1200
Republic of South Africa

2014/2015 POLICY AND BUDGET VOTE BY MEC FOR AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, HON. MA GAMEDE

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker;

Honourable Premier, Mr DD Mabuza;

African National Congress Leadership;

ANC Chief Whip;

Honourable Members of the Executive Council;

Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature;

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Hon. VV Windvoel;

And Members

Representatives from Organised Agriculture;

Representatives from the Business Community;

Representatives of Labour Federations;

The Director General, Dr Mkhize;

**Acting HOD for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and
Environmental Affairs, Mr Mgidi;**

Our 2013 Provincial Female Entrepreneur winner, Ms Thandi Mokwena;

Distinguished Guests;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen...

INTRODUCTION

Honourable Speaker, as we celebrate 20 years of our democratic breakthrough and continue to turn a new page on the improvement of

I would like to thank our Honourable Premier, Mr D.D Mabuza, and Members of the Executive Council for their guidance and support.

I also like to commend the oversight role played by:

- ✓ Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, chaired by Honourable VV Windvoel.
- ✓ The Budget and Finance Committee
- ✓ The Director General, Dr Mkhize and her staff
- ✓ The Acting HOD Mr Mgidi and his predecessor Ms Bezuidenhout for a sterling job
- ✓ The support from the Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Rural Development and Land Reform, and Environmental Affairs
- ✓ To our external stakeholders, organised agriculture and farmers; let us continue working together, sustain livelihoods and Together move South African forward
- ✓ Staff in my office
- ✓ The African National Congress
- ✓ My family, I would like to appreciate the support you are giving me

I Thank You!!!

CONCLUSION

As I conclude Honourable Speaker, I wish to appeal to this August House to approve the 2014/15 budget of **R1 152 612.00 Billion**, which is allocated in nine programmes as follows:

Programme 1: Administration: R 135 299-million

Programme 2: Sustainable Resource Management: R62 473-million

Programme 3: Farmer Support and Development Services: R 449 956-million

Programme 4: Veterinary Services: R 114 451-million

Programme 5: Technology, Research, and Development: R 47 900-million

Programme 6: Agriculture Economics: R 42 762-million

Programme 7: Structured Agriculture Training: R 71 365-million

Programme 8: Rural Development: R 147 108-million

Programme 9: Environmental Affairs an amount of R 81 208-million

The Total Budget for approval is **R1 152 612.00 Billion (One billion, one hundred and fifty two million and six hundred and twelve thousand Rand only).**

Honourable Speaker, this budget will enable us to drive the programmes that constitute the work of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs.

our people, we are reminded of the gallant fight of our forefathers to free the majority of our masses from the horrible existence of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

Colonialism and apartheid were rooted in the dispossession of the African people's land, the destruction of African farming and the super-exploitation of wage labourers, including farm workers and their families.

Honourable Speaker,

It is a fact that these structural faults that characterized the apartheid rural economy remain with us today.

Our Constitution states that:

"We, the people of South Africa recognising the injustices of our past honour those who suffered for justice and for our land, respect those who worked to build and develop our country, and believe that South Africa belongs to all those who live in it/ united in our diversity".

The Freedom Charter, adopted on the 26th of June 1955, also sang the same tune on the issue of sharing of land. It said and I quote "the land shall be shared among those who work it;

Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided amongst those who work it to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seeds, tractors and dams to save soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished".

The challenge facing us today is ensuring that we continue working on rebuilding this country, for future generations.

Poverty, inequality and joblessness are the consequences of centuries of underdevelopment and exploitation which was consciously perpetrated on the majority of the population, which had its most destructive and enduring impacts on rural South Africa.

Although the majority of our people live in former Bantustan areas, these regions account for 2/3rd of the population. Joblessness is unduly high in rural areas, where the majority of those with jobs earn poverty wages.

Sadly, this burden of rural poverty falls hardest on women and the youth, who are the majority in rural communities.

Honourable Speaker and Members,

We do acknowledge that many people, especially small scale and emerging farmers still lack the capacity, the means and the necessary skills, including the basic production inputs and mechanization; they still cannot meet the basic needs of running a productive and profitable farm.

These challenges cement the problems of chronic poverty and limit the potential of communities to sustain economic growth, rural livelihoods and social development.

Honourable Speaker during his State of the Province Address on 27 June 2014, our Honourable Premier, Mr DD Mabuza made reference to the province's Priorities on Economic Growth and Job Creation, and mentioned Agriculture and Rural Development as key to realising economic growth.

Honourable Speaker and Members,

The Department has 284 registered CPAs that are land holding entities in the province. In this financial year, we will embark on a process to assist all CPAs to elect new leadership, and adopt new constitutions because we see this as a source of the problems I just alluded to.

LAND SUMMIT

Honourable Speaker and Members,

To further ensure the alignment of Government's Land Reform programme, the Department is planning to hold the long awaited **Provincial Land Summit BEFORE** the end of the financial year.

The Land Summit will open dialogue for the challenges faced by farm dwellers and land reform beneficiaries.

Through the Summit we hope to improve the quality of life in rural household, enhance food security and exploit any available economic potential.

Honourable Speaker, August is Women's Month. Let me take this opportunity and announce that the Department will be honouring women who contribute in the fight against poverty, inequality and unemployment through their participation in agricultural activities, on Friday 08 August 2014.

The Female Entrepreneur Programme was formed by the then Department of Agriculture in 1999, aimed at encouraging and increasing the participation of women in Agriculture. The winners on Friday will represent the province at the DAFF National Female Entrepreneur of the Year competition, scheduled for the 22nd August 2014 in the North West Province.

Honourable Speaker,
Our caring government has taken a big step to ensure that those who missed the December 1998 land claims window period are given the opportunity to lodge their claims.

South Africans willing to lodge their land restitution claims are encouraged to do so until June 2019. This comes after President of the Republic, Honourable Jacob Zuma signed the **Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act of 15 of 2014** into law in June this year.

Land Tenure

Honourable Speaker and Members,

The plight of farm dwellers is still one of the challenges affecting the land reform process in the Province. Most areas under the Gert Sibande District in particular, have the highest number of farm dwellers and labour tenants.

Cases of land rights violations, including the reduction of grazing rights, refusal of burials, water cuts and farm eviction, continue to be the order of the day.

The Department will work closely with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform in trying to overcome this curse as a matter of urgency. A law firm called CTH has since been appointed to assist in providing legal assistance and professional mediation on this matter, including dealing with challenges facing CPAs - like the mismanagement of funds, conflicts and committee members who do not vacate office.

The Premier said, and I quote, "Honourable Speaker and Members, coupled with the focus areas highlighted above, the ANC-led government will be intensifying its work towards the promotion of an inclusive rural economy.

We will increase investment in rural development by accelerating the implementation of the **Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)** in the eight identified local municipalities, and those are: **Mkhondo, Chief Albert Luthuli, Dr Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Dr JS Moroka, Thembisile Hani, Dipaliseng, Bushbuckridge and Nkomazi Municipalities.**

Basically, we will be building on the excellent work that we, and our communities, have done over the past five years.

We will continue to ensure that local people benefit from business opportunities, skills development programmes and employment opportunities created by the local economy". Close quote.

The Honourable Premier has spoken. Now it is our responsibility to work tirelessly in ensuring that rural communities continue to benefit from CRDP, but above all, that they become masters of their own economies.

Madam Speaker,

Siwumnyango weZolimo, ukuthuthukiswa kwezindawo Zasemakhaya, Ezemihlaba kanye neZemvelo sithi:

Kubhunya Lutfuli, Kusephuka Tidzindzi, Sibuyela Emasimini!!!

MASIBUYELE EMASIMINI

R120million has been set aside for Masibuyele Emasimini.

- **25 800** ha will be ploughed and planted for the land reform beneficiaries;

- **9200** ha of land will be ploughed and planted for subsistence farmers;
- **6 740** households will benefit from Masibuyele Emasimini;
- **960** food gardens will be established and maintained;

R20million is set aside for the establishment of 4 new one stop service centres to keep inputs that will be working closely with the district offices.

Tractors and Implements will be procured for specific distribution in CRDP municipalities.

Honourable Speaker, we will strengthen our systems, and put in place measures that will help us monitor the use of our tractors. This will also assist us in ensuring that we meet our targets as planned.

R21million is set aside for the procurement of new tractors and implements

- **345** Tractors are available currently;
- **187** are in working condition, but need minor repairs;
- **158** tractors need major repairs;
- **R5.6Million** is set aside for such.

R280million will be spent on infrastructure projects spread across various programmes.

52 farms from all the Districts will be supported through various activities funded by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

Awareness Programmes. This will include:

- **270** schools will be participating in environmental awareness activities
- Awareness workshops Environmental
- Exhibitions
- Clean Up campaigns and
- Planting of Trees

THE RESTITUTION OF LAND RIGHTS AMENDMENT ACT

Land Redistribution

Honourable Speaker and Members,

R259.6-million has been set aside by DRDLR this financial year for the acquisition of **30 000 ha of land**, of which 50% of this land will be allocated to small holder farmers including farm occupiers, labour tenant and for Animal Veld Management Programme (AVMP) purposes in the whole Province. This includes relocation of animals that are in townships and any other congested areas.

6637 claims were lodged by December 1998 cut-off date, of which

3965 claims had been settled by end of March 2014, with

2672 outstanding - complex in nature,

268 885 individual beneficiaries

58399 households

18 265 are female headed households

469355.5226 HA restored

There are 764 properties acquired through PLAS currently under lease and caretaker-ship that have been allocated to black emerging farmers.

For these reasons, we will be working with local government and other stakeholders, to address challenges on: Waste Management; Air Quality; Greening Campaigns and EIAs etc..

R81-million is set aside for Environmental Affairs. This will focus on the following:

Waste Disposal Management –this includes safe disposal of all waste generated by households and industries. There are 56 sites in the province, out of these, only 25 are in compliance.

Air Quality Management - the air quality within the province, especially in the Highveld, Nkangala and Gert Sibande. There are 4 existing air quality centres. The department will be commissioning 1 in Victor Khanye Municipality, this Financial Year.

Greening Campaign – including planting of trees, encouraging everyone to grow their own food, so that the welfare and upkeep of gardens ensures sustainability, environmental awareness, food security, income generation and poverty alleviation.

For the past **5years**, **256 EIAs** including land use applications were finalised. This year, we are planning to finalise **150** to assist and drive the economy of the province.

MASIBUYELE ESIBAYENI

Honourable Speaker,

R15 million has been set aside for Masibuyele Esibayeni programme for the current financial year, above that,

R6.7million is set aside for fencing and handling equipment.

The following livestock will be delivered to the emerging livestock farmers:

- **310 Nguni breeds** will be delivered amongst the following Municipalities : Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge, Dr. JS Moroka, and Thembisile Hani Municipalities;
- **156 Drankernsburgers** in Mkhondo, Chief Albert Luthuli, Dipaliseng and Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Municipalities;
- **150** dairy cows in Mkhondo, Chief Albert Luthuli, and Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Municipalities;
- **234** Goats, **260** Sheep and **154** Pigs will be delivered to livestock farmers in other Municipalities;

There is a good story to tell from some of the beneficiaries of our Bull and Heifer programme. Some of our farmers I have interacted with so far, say they are ready to start returning the loaned livestock to the Department, because they have reproduced.

This is good news because now more aspirant livestock farmers in the province may be assisted.

YOUTH COOPERATIVES

Honourable Speaker,

R20-million is set aside for infrastructure development, to construct environmentally controlled poultry houses for 4 youth cooperatives;

The 4 broiler houses will have the capacity to carry **40 000** chickens.

R13.9-million will be used for the development of water supply and infield irrigation system;

24 Youth Cooperatives will benefit from this.

R6-million is set aside for training of existing cooperatives in CRDP sites with the support of the Colleges and FETs on the following commodities:

- vegetables, and fruits
- animal production, including poultry.

R2.2-million is set aside for commodity based mentorship programme,

243 beneficiaries will be supported on this programme

R2.1-million is set aside for youth cooperatives in CRDP sites particularly for training in vegetable production; and

R1.8-million is set aside for training on livestock production;

Honourable Speaker and Members,

The National Rural Youth Service Corp, commonly known as **NARYSEC**, is a youth flagship programme which also forms part of CRDP, aimed at creating job opportunities for the rural youth. This programme is funded and implemented by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform

Narysec transforms the youth in rural areas from being job seekers, to become job creators in their own right, breaking the vicious cycle of social grants dependency.

There will be 432 **New Recruits** for the current financial year for a period of 4 years.

VETERINARY SERVICES

Honourable Speaker,

The Department is further tasked with the responsibility of ensuring both human and animal health through the provision Veterinary services. This is accomplished through abattoir inspections for safety of the meat and meat products.

R6.5-million is set aside for building dipping tanks in the foot and mouth disease areas ie Ehlanzeni North and South and some areas around Gert Sibande. This will also include the improvement of the cold storage facilities and animal carcass disposal.

R2.3-million is set aside for the enhancement of the blue economy through the construction of an aquaculture facility, in Mbombela Municipality that will focus on warm water fish species. The facility will enhance the relations between the Department and the new University.

R3-million will be used for the development of a new aquaculture facility.

ENVIRONMENT, POLLUTION and WASTE MANAGEMENT

Honourable Speaker and Members,

Section 24 of the Constitution of South Africa states that, and I quote: "Everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and to have the environment protected, for the benefit of the present and future generations." End quote.

It is our responsibility as a Department to ensure the management of air quality and waste management. It is also our responsibility to implement relevant environmental legislation and policies to best practice and standards.

AGRO PROCESSING AND INDUSTRIES

Honourable Speaker and Members,

R35-million is set aside for the development of Phase One of the **Mpumalanga Fresh Produce Market**.

In his State of the Province Address, the Honourable Premier also said that this is one infrastructure project to be prioritised this year.

The Department will work in partnership with the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency, **(MEGA)** to make sure this dream comes true.

The Department will also develop 4 Agri-hubs in Dr JS Moroka, Bushbuckridge, Nkomazi and Mkhondo Local Municipalities, which will be linked to the markets.

Honourable Speaker and Members,

These Agri-hubs will act as first stop shops for farmers intending to trade or process products to be delivered to the Fresh Produce Market, which will later be exported to other countries such as the Sultanate of Oman.

The Department will also ensure the development of 8 secondary Agricultural Cooperatives, in each CRDP municipality linked to the school nutrition programme.

These cooperatives will be the main trading entities with Government in programmes such as the School Nutrition, and will be responsible for the coordination of Agricultural produce through the already existing primary Agricultural Cooperatives throughout the province.

There will be 432 **New Recruits** for the current financial year for a period of 4 years.

500 NARYSEC participants have completed their skills training in Community House Building and are waiting for certification – through Ehlanzeni, Nkangala and Gert Sibande FETs.

Honourable Speaker,

The Youth Coops are expected to benefit from **Memorandum of Understanding** signed by myself on behalf of the Department, during an Imbizo held on the 19th of July 2014 in Mkhondo.

The MOU was signed with two giant companies in the sector, TWK and AFGRI. They committed to be part of our quest to assist in developing our small scale farmers, prioritising the youth.

Plans are afoot to have other companies in the Forestry sector, Citrus and Sugar producers, to also come on board and sign similar MoUs.

YOUTH TRAINING INCLUDING AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

R9.5-million is set aside for training of **660** youth registered in higher education and training facilities. This will include the completion of Phase 4 of the Marapyane Campus of the Lowveld College of Agriculture.

R2.3-million is set aside for 5 Research Farms ie. Athole, Nooidgedacht, Funda Mlimi, LCA and Marapyane and Aquaculture facility will be constructed in Mbombela Municipality.

COMPREHENSIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CRDP)

Honourable Speaker,

Agriculture is the main contributor to job and economic development in rural communities in our province.

As a coordinating Department, we will continue with the coordination of all national, provincial and local development activities intended for the 8 identified CRDP municipalities.

This includes constant engagement with traditional authorities, local councillors, business, churches, civil organisations and the Council of Stakeholders.

The following agricultural projects will be prioritised in this financial year:

R22-million will be used in **30 irrigation projects** covering sugarcane, citrus, bananas, and vegetables in all 8 CRDP Municipalities. The following projects will be supported:

- Semakaleng and Dr JS Moroka Vegetable Project in Dr JS Moroka Municipality;
- Hoxani and Saringwa in Bushbuckridge Municipality;
- Corromandel in Thaba Chweu Municipality;
- Malelane Sugarcane Development; in Nkomazi Municipality

R12.6-million will be used in developing **12** agricultural water provision projects, siting, drilling, testing and equipping of boreholes in all the 8 CRDP sites.

R4.5-million is set aside for refurbishment of existing poultry houses that are dysfunctional in Nkangala District Municipality. And those are:

- Lefata
- Letolo
- Timtok

LAND AND AGRARIAN REFORM

Honourable Speaker and Members,

The Department now works very close with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, with the aim of, amongst others, bringing life back to most of our land reform farms.

R3.9-million will be spent on the placing of **40 currently unemployed Agriculture graduates**, in Land Reform farms that are in CRDP sites.

This will ensure that these farms remain functional, and grow the graduates to be successful farm managers, and farmers.

52 ailing Land Reform farms will receive pre-and-post settlement support services, to help them participate in the mainstream economy, again. This will be funded from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

The Department will also render and coordinate training and advice, partnership arrangements, mentorship, conflict management and business support.