

Keynote Address by MEC Nakedi Kekana at the Launch of the Limpopo Women's Month Programme, Ga-Nkwana, Fetakgomo-Tubatse Municipality

Programme Director,
Your Worship Mayor of Fetakgomo-Tubatse, Cllr Eddie Maila,
Our esteemed Traditional Leaders,
Councillors,
Distinguished guests,
Our friends from the media,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning,

I stand before you today with great honour and privilege to deliver this keynote address on behalf of our esteemed Premier, Mr Chupu Stanley Mathabatha. Today, we gather here in the beautiful Fetakgomo-Tubatse Municipality, Ga-Nkwana, to reflect on the achievements of the Limpopo Provincial government in women's emancipation and empowerment.

As we celebrate Women's Month, it is important to acknowledge the struggles and sacrifices of the women who came before us. The theme for this year, "Accelerating socio-economic opportunities for women's empowerment," is a testament to our commitment to continue the work started by those brave women who fought for our rights in the 1950s.

The Limpopo Provincial government has made significant strides in advancing women's emancipation and empowerment. We have recognised the importance of capacitating

women in critical sectors of the economy, such as technology, construction, mining, transport, and logistics. Through various initiatives and programmes, we have provided women with the necessary tools, training, and support to excel in these sectors.

Our government has also prioritised addressing the persisting challenges of gender-based violence, gender inequality, poverty, and unemployment. We understand that true empowerment can only be achieved when these issues are effectively tackled. Through partnerships with civil society and the private sector, we have developed comprehensive interventions to combat gender-based violence, promote gender equality, and create economic opportunities for women.

In the spirit of inclusivity, we have established cooperatives to empower women to pool their resources, share knowledge, and access markets that were previously inaccessible to them. These cooperatives have not only provided economic opportunities but have also fostered a sense of unity and collaboration among women in our province.

Furthermore, we have invested in capacity building and support for Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) owned by women. We recognise the vital role that these enterprises play in job creation and economic development. By providing training, mentorship, and financial support, we have empowered women to start and grow their businesses, contributing to the growth of our economy.

As we reflect on the struggles of the women in the 1950s, we are reminded of their determination, resilience, and unwavering commitment to achieving equality and justice. Their sacrifices have paved the way for the progress we have made today. It is our duty to honour their legacy by continuing to fight for the rights and empowerment of women in our province.

Today, we unveil the 2023 Women's Month Programme, which is designed to address the persisting challenges of gender-based violence, gender inequality, poverty, and unemployment. This month will serve as a platform for interventions across government, civil society, and the private sector to develop and empower women in our nation.

The activities for Women's Month will be diverse and impactful. The main event to celebrate Women's Day on the 09th will be at Rebone Stadium, Mogalakwena Municipality. We will kickstart the month with a Business Venture session, where women entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to showcase their businesses and connect with potential investors and partners. This session aims to foster economic growth and create a supportive environment for women-owned businesses to thrive.

Furthermore, we will have a women's prayer day with some of the local mayors, where we will come together in unity to pray for the well-being and success of our women. This spiritual gathering will serve as a reminder of the strength and resilience that women possess, and the importance of nurturing their spiritual well-being.

Sessions on gender equality and an inclusive society will also be held, as we believe that true empowerment can only be achieved when all members of society are treated with fairness and respect. These sessions will provide a platform for dialogue and education on the importance of gender equality and the eradication of discrimination.

In addition, we will focus on the establishment of cooperatives, as we believe that collective efforts can lead to greater success. Through the formation of cooperatives, women will have the opportunity to pool their resources, share knowledge, and access

markets that were previously inaccessible to them. This initiative will empower women to become self-sufficient and contribute to the growth of our economy.

Capacity building and support to Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) will also be a key focus during Women's Month. We recognise the importance of providing training, mentorship, and financial support to women owned SMMEs, as they play a vital role in job creation and economic development.

Furthermore, we will address the pressing issue of gender-based violence through a dedicated workshop. This workshop will provide a platform for education, awareness, and the development of strategies to combat gender-based violence. We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive society for all, and this workshop will be a step towards achieving that goal.

Lastly, we will tackle the issues of depression and fraudulent marriages, as we recognise the detrimental impact these issues have on the lives of women. Through education, counselling, and support, we aim to empower women to overcome these challenges and live fulfilling lives.

These programmes will be championed across all districts of Limpopo, as we believe in the importance of inclusivity and equal opportunities for all women. We are committed to ensuring that no woman is left behind and that every woman in our province can thrive and succeed.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the women of Limpopo for their strength, courage, and resilience. Your contributions to our society, economy, and culture are invaluable. I also extend my appreciation to the Limpopo Provincial government, our

partners, and stakeholders for their unwavering support and commitment to women's emancipation and empowerment.

Let us use this Women's Month as an opportunity to reflect on our achievements, celebrate our progress, and recommit ourselves to the ongoing struggle for gender equality. Together, let us continue to accelerate socio-economic opportunities for women's empowerment, ensuring that no woman is left behind.

Thank you!