

16 January 2025
Media Statement
To All News Editors and Journalists

RE: Limpopo Executive Council Convenes Special Meeting to Address Flood Disaster

The Limpopo Executive Council held a special meeting on 15 January 2025, to discuss the ongoing disaster caused by severe rain and flooding that has impacted the province. The meeting was convened considering the national state of disaster classification issued by the Head of the National Disaster Management Centre for windstorms and flooding on 13 November 2024 and 12 January 2025, respectively.

The province has faced unprecedented challenges due to strong winds and heavy rains, resulting in significant damage to households and infrastructure. Many families have been left devastated, with roofs blown off their homes, shattered windows and personal belongings destroyed. The hailstorms and flash floods have also severely impacted essential infrastructure, including schools, clinics, roads and bridges.

Notably, the Waterberg District Municipality has been particularly hard-hit with recent floods, with Witpoort Hospital experiencing severe flooding from the Phalala River, necessitating the evacuation of patients to Ellisras Hospital. The full extent of the damage to infrastructure is still being assessed, as ongoing rains hinder comprehensive evaluations.

The rapid impact assessment conducted in affected areas in the entire province has so far revealed alarming statistics: over 352 houses, 108 schools, 412 roads, 7 clinics, and 19 bridges have been damaged. Tragically, there have been 14 drowning incidents and 6 injuries.

In response to the crisis, the Limpopo Provincial Government has initiated several short-term relief measures wherein emergency shelters have been procured and distributed to affected families.

The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) has provided food parcels to qualifying victims, while Gift of the Givers has assisted with food relief. Local municipalities have received blankets for distribution to those in need, and the National Department of Human Settlements has delivered building materials for 29 houses in Mamatlakala village.

Looking ahead, the Executive Council recognises the need for long-term relief efforts. Assessments are underway to determine which families qualify for permanent housing assistance, and there is an urgent need to reconstruct and repair damaged public infrastructure.

The Executive Council has acknowledged the report on the state of disaster in the province and to that effect has started the process of applying for funds for the January

2025 disaster, in addition to the R850 million that has been applied for the October 2024 disaster.

The Premier, Dr Phophi Ramathuba, said: “We would like our residents to be patient with us as we process this matter. Members of the Executive Council will be going around the province to make assessment of the extent of damages. Our priority has always been that we shall deal with those areas that are locked in because of either bridges or roads have been destroyed. Afterwards we shall tackle the issue of infrastructure repairs like, roads, schools, clinics and others.”

“Whilst waiting for the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) to respond to our request, the Provincial Treasury will analyse departmental expenditure reports to identify potential funding for urgent response and recovery projects,” concluded Premier Dr Ramathuba.

The Executive Council further directed the Office of the Premier to begin working on a framework that would look at the capacity of the province to proactively deal with disasters. This task team will look at available capacity, structure, funding and placement of such unit or centre.

EXCO urges all residents to stay safe and heed warnings from the South African Weather Service regarding ongoing severe weather conditions.

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Issued by the Limpopo Provincial Government

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