



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA'S ADDRESS AT THE LIMPOPO
INFRASTRUCTURE WORKSHOP, MEKETE LODGE, POLOKWANE, 02
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Programme Director
Members of the Executive Council
The Director General
Heads of Department
Ladies and gentlemen and stakeholders

Good Morning!

Today, as we gather for this crucial Infrastructure Workshop, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the journey we are embarking on together. This moment in time calls upon us to reflect on the mandate given to us by the people of Limpopo and our role in driving meaningful change.

As we are all aware, the 7th South African administration has prioritised three key areas: inclusive growth and job creation, tackling poverty and the ever-increasing cost of living, and the building of a capable, ethical, and developmental state. These priorities resonate deeply with our aspirations outlined in the National Development Plan, setting the stage for a united effort towards achieving economic prosperity.

Here in Limpopo, our government envisions a development strategy that aligns seamlessly with these priorities. The Limpopo Development Plan emphasises essential needs - water, roads and unemployment. These are not mere statistics; they embody our people's aspirations for a sustainable future. We must commit ourselves to addressing these fundamental areas as we move forward.

As we reflect on these priorities, we must also ask ourselves: Are we equal to the tasks at hand? The current state of our infrastructure management leaves much to be desired. Poor planning has, at times, led to projects without budgets to match our bold declarations.

We find ourselves at a precipice, facing unprecedented societal pressures, shrinking economic opportunities and an alarming rise in unemployment. It is evident that our society's despondency towards government is tangible. Their impatience waits for no invitation, emphasising the urgency with which we must act.

Our infrastructure continually bears the burden of a growing population. While the increase in individual households in Limpopo is a positive indication of growth, it also highlights the challenges we face - a prickly pear requiring not only recognition but also mastery in leveraging these opportunities effectively.

We have gathered here before in various capacities, identifying the

necessity of workshops like this one to take stock of our commitments and progress. The critical question remains: Are the individuals assigned to infrastructure capable and agile in their responsibilities? There is an undeniable need for us to cultivate requisite skills within our teams. The ABC of building a capable state starts with investing in the training and capacity-building processes of our current workforce.

As we navigate through the prevailing pessimism in society, we must consider how to turn this tide. We require a rigorous project management strategy that ensures we spend 100% of our budget on credible, quality infrastructure projects. A commitment to excellence will provide us with the leverage to request further support from the national fiscus. Our colleagues in COGHSTA exemplify this possibility - they have demonstrated how effective spending can lead to recovery and rejuvenation.

However, we face challenges, particularly regarding road infrastructure, which we have often overlooked. Have we, for instance, developed the necessary recovery plans through the Roads Agency Limpopo? Our roads are more than just routes; they are pathways to recovery and it's imperative that we fortify this foundation.

The decision to convene this workshop stems from the Executive Council's desire for a clear strategic direction. I envision this gathering not merely as a discussion but as a foundational step toward developing a comprehensive execution plan - a roadmap that will guide our actions in the months and years to come.

Moreover, I urge you, officials, to bring forth innovative ideas - what new concepts can we pilot and adapt to bolster our capacity? It is time to explore what lies beyond the tried-and-true methods that have failed us in planning and delivering on our promises. We have seen how we shamelessly called on our President to come open a project which to date has not been concluded. Yet, we don't carry a sense of urgency and shame in such acts. It is that that I hope we shall be able to turn away from and build the Limpopo we want.

There are stakeholders from various institutions that are helping us in delivering infrastructure projects. Equally, the challenge to you is what better ways of delivery are you bringing to Limpopo. What is the rationale of keeping that relationship with you if the results are not showing bold changes in the pace of service provision? If infrastructure budgets are returned to National Treasury, it reflects badly on the type of partnership we have with you.

In closing, let us rise to the occasion. Let this workshop be the catalyst for transformative action in Limpopo. Together, we can forge a resilient future anchored in collaboration, innovation and unwavering commitment to the people we serve.

Thank you.