

OPENING REMARKS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, ME MATHABO MOKAPO ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE POVERTY ERADICATION PROJECT, WELKOM, 21 FEBRUARY 2007.

Programme Director
Minister in the Presidency, Dr. Essop Pahad
MEC for Agriculture, Mr. Casca Mokitlane
Honourable Mayors and Speakers
Honourable Councillors
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to express my deepest appreciation for the honor that has been bestowed on me, to address you as we launch the Poverty Eradication Project.

First and foremost, allow me acknowledge the presence of foreign dignitaries in our midst, which is the Mayor of Xai Xai Municipality and her accompanying delegation from the Xai Xai Municipality in the People's Republic of Mozambique.

Our honourable guests are on a visit to exchange programmes and ideas with the Matjhabeng Municipality. It is envisaged that this process may culminate in the twinning of the two municipalities in due course.

Owing to disparities and inequalities associated with our past, our economy continues to be characterized by a dual nature, viz. the first economy and the second economy.

In our concerted efforts to bridge this economies-divide, poverty alleviation projects constitute the bedrock on which we can finally extricate the poor and the marginalized within our communities from the scourge of poverty.

The launch of this important project today will signal a new era in the lives of the beneficiaries that have been identified to benefit from the project.

This important initiative by the Lejweleputswa District Municipality together with other role players will empower our people to acquire skills on how to catch fish, rather than giving them fish directly.

The project we are launching today demonstrates in unequivocal terms the commitment of our government to push back the frontiers of poverty.

Our District in the past was characterized by the dominance of the mining sector within the local economy. And it is projects of this nature that will ensure that we diversify the economic outlook of our region so that the majority of its citizens can benefit.

To our beneficiaries, my message is that they should ensure that they equip themselves with the necessary skills, i.e. managerial, business and technical skills so as to be able to run successful business ventures.

On this note, on behalf of the Matjhabeng Municipality and its community, I wish to welcome everyone present within our borders and hope that the launch today will live an indelible imprint on our minds.

Thank you.

EXECUTIVE MAYOR MATHABO MOKAPO