



**SPEECH NOTES BY KWAZULU-NATAL MEC FOR TRANSPORT,
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MR BHEKI CELE AT THE
INGWAVUMA SERVICE DELIVERY VISIT ON TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2009**

Protocol Observed

- We have come here today to say that as a Provincial Government, we work together to ensure that our people have a better life. Their tomorrow is better than today.
- Our government's efforts in trying to push back the frontiers of poverty are now known everywhere. Over the past years, we have been gradually unlocking the economic shackles by means of innovative programmes that sought to address rural challenges.
- Our South African Constitution enshrines the rights and equality of women. Our legal framework demands that we are diligent in our efforts to advance the cause of women's social and economic empowerment.
- We know that in South Africa the poorest of the poor are found in women headed households. I do not have to cite statistic after statistic that would validate the plight of rural women and single mothers in particular.

- It is for this reason that we established Zibambele Road Maintenance programme which is a benchmark against which we can judge the progress we make in the empowerment of rural women in particular.
- Our policy says that contractors must be identified and selected on the basis of poverty in their community and not on the basis of which political party they belong to.
- Our Zibambele programme has been recognised as “best practice” in South Africa. We therefore cannot sit back and allow Zibambele to be neglected by anyone. We have set the standards for the rest of South Africa and we need to take our leadership responsibilities seriously.
- I have been confronted by Ingwavuma Zibambele contractors regarding deductions made on their social grants by SASSA. The actual reasons for deductions were unknown.
- In 2004, the then, Department of Social Welfare and Population Development took an initiative to root out fraud and corruption in the social assistance system. One of the initiatives was to interface the Social Pension System (SOCPEN) with Personnel Salary System (PERSAL) with an aim of identifying government officials who were receiving social grants fraudulently.
- Database of all government officials who were in receipt of social grants was developed and circulated to all local offices to investigate, cancel fraudulent cases, recover overpayments if necessary and update the system (SOCPEN). In the development of the databases, Zibambele participants were not excluded.

- We have had meetings with SASSA and a long term partnership has been formed between DOT and SASSA. Both institutions have agreed to assist each other to address the challenges facing our contractors.
- From the investigation that was conducted, it transpired that Provisions of the legislation together with the guidelines set for the System interface project were not properly followed; as a result, overpayment was raised to incorrect beneficiaries.
- Zibambele beneficiaries are entitled to receive social grants despite the fact that they are participants to Zibambele Programme, as their income levels are below the threshold as regulated.
- All deductions effected for the grant recipients have been cancelled and the correct amounts will be payable in April 2009, since the payments for March 2009 has already been generated and provided to the payment contractors. Amounts owed to the beneficiaries have been calculated and will be paid as a lump sum to all affected during the April 2009 pay period.
- I am proud to say that Ingwavuma now has 821 Zibambele contractors. These contractors have formed 41 saving clubs and they have collectively saved R 232 039.08 as at January 2009. All this is an indication of the potential and the power that exist within poor people, especially women, when it comes to saving.
- This government is committed to the development of poor communities in this province and activities that deprive the rights of poor individuals cannot be condoned.

I thank you