

**ADDRESS BY MEC ROGERS BASIKOPO MAKAMU ON THE
OCCASION OF THE TABLING OF BUDGET VOTE 11 OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE, HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS TO THE LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE, LEBOWAKGOMO LEGISLATIVE
CHAMBERS.**

15 AUGUST 2024

**“THERE SHALL BE HOUSES, SECURITY, AND COMFORT FOR
ALL”**

Honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker
Honourable Premier of the Province, Dr. Phophi Ramathuba;
Chief Whip and Deputy Chief Whip of the Majority Party;
Colleagues in the Executive Council;
Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature;
Honourable Members of Parliament and NCOP;
Your Worship, Executive Mayors and Mayors of our Municipalities;
The Leadership of SALGA in the Province;
Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of Limpopo House of Traditional
Leaders, including the entire Executive Committee;
Provincial Leadership of CONTRALESA;
Our esteemed Majesties and Royal Highnesses present;
The Leadership of the Ruling Party, the African National Congress,
Leaders of Opposition Parties;
Representatives of NHBRC, RISIMA, and HDA;
CoGHSTA Staff led by the Head of Department, Dr. M. Malahlela;

Members of the Media present;
Invited Guests and Stakeholders of the Departments;
Comrades, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Introduction

As we gather here today in the month of August, we reflect on the significant strides women have made in our society. It was in this very month in 1956 that women from all walks of life united in the Great Women's March to the Union Buildings, where they fearlessly demanded an end to the oppressive pass laws. These women not only carried the aspirations of their own generation but also laid the groundwork for the freedoms we enjoy today.

Fast forward to 2024, we celebrate not only the achievements of women in our society but also their leadership. It is a point of pride that we have a woman Premier, Honourable Dr. Phophi Ramathuba, and a woman Speaker, Makoma Makhurupetje, presiding over this esteemed house. These advancements are a testament to the 30 years of freedom and democracy that our country has enjoyed and continues to enjoy.

As I alluded in the previous Budget Speech in this August House in March this year, the 7th administration of the Limpopo Provincial Government is finally upon us. This presents us an opportunity to roll out programs and projects that will transform the lives of our people in our province. As we roll out our programs, we must at all material times ensure that they contribute massively to the economic growth and development

of our province and the people, as alluded to by the Honourable Premier who put economic development at the top of our priority list.

Program 1: Administration

Honourable Speaker and Member

“We remain on course to build a capable and professional civil service that delivers on its mandate and is accountable to the South African people...”

~ President Cyril Ramaphosa

The department is continuing to build capacity internally in order to have a stable and well-functioning organisation that is able to deliver on its mandate. We have in the current financial year advertised fifty-five (55) vacant positions which include two Deputy Directors General (DDG) for branches Traditional Affairs and Cooperative Governance. Filling these two DDG positions will assist us as we continue to focus on supporting and improving performance of municipalities and strengthening our support to traditional leadership in the province.

The department has attained an unqualified audit opinion with findings from the Auditor General. Honourable members must take note that although the audit outcome has not changed, the department has however improved based on the reduction in terms of matters of emphasis on the auditor’s report. The

department has also achieved fair presentation of the Annual Financial Statement without material misstatements. This translates to clean bill of AFS set for the 2023/24 Financial Year.

Program 2: Integrated Human Settlements

Honourable Speaker

“There shall be houses, security and comfort,” Freedom Charter

Housing remains a cornerstone of human dignity and a key indicator of a society's progress. Our commitment to breaking new ground in integrated human settlements has led to significant strides in providing housing for all, particularly for vulnerable groups such as Military Veterans.

Asbestos Removal and Replacement

We have made notable progress in eradicating mud houses and replacing asbestos roofing, ensuring that our people live in safe and healthy environments.

The second phase of the removal and replacement of 755 asbestos roofs has commenced, to date twenty (20) roofs were replaced in the first quarter of the current financial year.

The Principal Agent has been appointed to finalise phase four of The Tzaneen – Talana CRU project, which comprises 452 units.

The detailed designs have been provisionally approved, and the PA is now in the process of finalizing the design review.

The Makhado – Tshikota CRU project, consisting of 118 units, has completed 50% of earthworks, with sewer and water installations at 21% and 7%, respectively. Our expectation is that by the end of this financial year, extensive work would have been done. The people of Tshikota have been waiting for this life changing project and we promise to deliver it.

The Marapong CRU project, comprising 514 units, is currently at 81% completion, with 419 units roofed. However, the project has faced delays due to the transition of responsibilities from the Principal Agent (PA) to the Project Review Team (PRT) for management. Additionally, the contractor's poor performance has contributed to the delays.

The Department and the National Housing Finance Corporation will develop a model and project for Altoostyd (Joe Slovo Integrated Human Settlement Development).

Out of 26 bulk infrastructure projects, 12 are located in A which comprises Sekhukhune, Capricorn and Waterberg District Municipalities. In Lebowakgomo Unit F, also known as Makotse, the contractor is actively engaged in earthworks for the installation of sewer pipes and manholes; Masakaneng bulk water and sewer infrastructure project is at 95%; and

Rossenekal Geohydrological study, borehole refurbishment and mapping projects is at 98% completion.

Title Deeds

Additionally, we are focused on the transfer of title deeds, a significant milestone in our work to empower communities. By giving our people ownership of their homes, we are not just providing them with a place to live; we are giving them a stake in property ownership of this country. Our people can use a title deed as a collateral at the bank to apply for a loan.

Mining Towns

The Department is actively supporting the revitalization of five designated mining towns: Lephalale, Thabazimbi, Mogalakwena, Elias Motsoaledi, and Fetakgomo Tubatse. Our primary focus is the development of essential water and sanitation infrastructure within these municipalities. For the 2024/25 financial year, an allocation exceeding R200 million has been earmarked for projects across these towns. These projects are at various stages of implementation, with the Motetema Wastewater Treatment Works successfully completed in the first quarter of the financial year at a cost of R26.7 million.

Military Veterans

The construction of 132 houses for military veterans is underway, with 22 of these homes successfully completed in the first quarter of this financial year. Each completed house not only provides shelter but also serves as a heartfelt gesture of gratitude, ensuring that our veterans have a place to call home as a token of appreciation for their courage and dedication.

Land Acquisition

The department has set a target of acquiring 20 hectares of land in the 2024/25 financial year, with R12.6 million allocated to secure suitably located land for integrated, sustainable human settlements, with a special focus on Priority Housing Development Areas (PHSHDAs) and Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

Land has been identified in Makhado and Polokwane, which will support PHSHDA and SEZ developments, respectively. The Housing Development Agency has been mandated to assess and acquire these land portions. Additionally, the department has received a response from the Treasury on the Musina land acquisition. Continued engagement between the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, and the Housing Development Agency is progressing very well to agree on the valuation method.

Formalisation of Informal Settlements

The department has set a target to formalise seven informal settlements in the 2024/25 financial year, with a budget of R8.4 million in Mogalakwena, Fetakgomo Tubatse, Maruleng, Greater Tzaneen, and Modimolle Mookgophong municipalities.

Program 3: Cooperative Governance

Honourable Speaker and members

“In the design of our democratic unitary state, we introduced cooperative governance to ensure that the three spheres of government worked together to meet the needs of the people.”

~ President Cyril Ramaphosa

Our focus on cooperative governance is aimed at ensuring that all municipalities are well governed to deliver all basic services to communities of our province. The improvement in spending on the Municipal Infrastructure Grant is a testament to our commitment to building better communities. As at end of June 2024, R 3.148 billion has been spent, translating to 94.4%. This expenditure is higher than in June 2023 (88.3%) by 6.1%. An amount of R 186.316 million remain unspent.

The institutionalisation of the District Development Model (DDM) continues to be a priority, as it fosters greater collaboration between all levels of government, ensuring that resources are utilised efficiently.

On the state of our municipalities, we must acknowledge both the progress made and the challenges that remain. The importance of effective local governance cannot be overstated, as municipalities are the closest level of government to our people. Municipalities are responsible for fostering development in our communities as His Excellency President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa emphasised during the opening of Parliament that “our municipalities must become both the providers of social services and facilitators of inclusive economic growth”.

The Honourable Premier made it clear in this august house that the provision of water to our communities should occupy centre stage at all times. The “HiNwaMatiFridays” initiative to be launched at Homu 14a in the Greater Giyani Municipality this Friday, tomorrow 16th August will be our rallying call as we crisscross the province, launching water infrastructure that will ultimately eradicate water poverty for the people of Limpopo. If water is life, then now is the time to ensure that it flows to all households.

Going forward municipalities are expected to submit their individual Annual Financial Statements by the end of August 2024.

Over the past year, we have taken significant steps to improve the performance of our municipalities in areas such as Thabazimbi, Musina, and others, we have introduced targeted

interventions that have already begun to bear fruit, however Thabazimbi still remains a major challenge administratively and politically. The municipality is receiving attention to restore it to functionality so that it performs its constitutional mandate of providing quality and sustainable services to the communities.

We will engage regularly with external auditors regarding their findings, and the Municipal Public Accounts Committees (MPAC) will monitor progress. It is crucial for municipalities to comply with all legislative prescripts governing municipal finances. Of serious concern is the high reliance on consultants by municipalities, and it is on this basis that we concur with the President of the Republic of South Africa His Excellency Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa who said, “We will put in place systems to ensure that capable and qualified people are appointed to senior positions in municipalities”. Together with the Provincial Treasury, we are working to address this issue, so that with qualified people in the employ of our municipalities funds used for consultants can instead be directed towards addressing service delivery challenges faced by our communities.

Disaster Management

Honourable Speaker

“We cannot stop natural disasters but we can arm ourselves with knowledge: so many lives wouldn't have to be lost if there was enough disaster preparedness. Some people

don't like change, but you need to embrace change if the alternative is disaster.”

Rampant fires are raging across the province, causing extensive damage in areas such as Tzaneen, Waterberg, the Modjadjiskloof mountains, and other regions. Our Disaster Management teams have been hard at work, responding to emergencies and ensuring that our communities are fire-wise, encouraging a culture of risk avoidance in the face of these challenges. We have issued appeals to the public to remain vigilant, take necessary precautions, and cooperate with emergency services to minimize the impact of these devastating fires.

Traditional Affairs

Honourable members

“We must strongly resist any concession to them where they will stand outside the democratic process by investing them with authoritative powers. ...We must find an amicable solution based on democratic principles, and which allows traditional leaders to play a meaningful role in all levels of government,” Nelson Mandela, The Presidential Years.

The Honourable Premier has mandated me to continue the work that began in the sixth administration of supporting the institution of traditional affairs. I declare here and now that the preservation of our traditional and cultural heritage is a vital part of our work,

and I will do whatever it takes to move the institution of traditional leadership towards a brighter future.

Over the past year, we have invested in building and rehabilitating traditional council offices, ensuring that our traditional leaders have the infrastructure they need to serve their communities effectively. For this financial year, we plan to construct four traditional council offices. Contractors are expected to take site soon. Procurement for the construction of Mapela Traditional Council office is being attended to by the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure.

We have also procured and delivered 163 vehicles in the previous financial year, with 108 having been handed to senior traditional leaders, while 56 more will be processed, procured and delivered before the end of this financial year. These vehicles are provided to senior traditional leaders to enable them to carry out their duties with the dignity and respect they deserve.

For the 2024 financial year, we have set a target to procure furniture for 24 Traditional Council offices. We are prepared to deliver as soon as all assessments are finalized.

We applaud and congratulate our traditional leaders for the successful hosting and completion of the 2024 traditional initiation school season. This is a source of pride for us, as it demonstrates our commitment to preserving our customs and traditions in a safe and respectful manner.

The constitution and reconstitution of traditional councils have been conducted with transparency and inclusivity, ensuring that these bodies truly represent the communities they serve.

Acknowledgments and Appreciations:

First and foremost, I thank my family for their unwavering support, the African National Congress, under whose banner we serve the people of this province whose support we don't take for granted.

To Honourable Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba and my colleagues in the Executive Council, your collaboration and dedication have made our collective efforts possible. I also wish to acknowledge the Members of the Oversight Committees.

A special thank you goes to the Head of Department, Dr. Modjadji Malahlela, and the dedicated staff of the Department of COGHSTA. Your hard work and commitment are the backbone of the achievements we celebrate today.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Honourable Speaker, I am proud to stand before this House today to present Budget Vote 11 for the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, and Traditional Affairs. This budget is not merely a financial document; it is a blueprint for building a better future for all the people of Limpopo.

I hereby table Vote 11 of the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, and Traditional Affairs for the 2024/2025 financial year.

The current budget is set at R2.5 billion, which will increase to R2.6 billion for the 2025/26 fiscal year but will decrease back to R2.5 billion in 2026/27. Conditional grants are currently at R1.1 billion and will remain unchanged for 2025/26 before reducing to R1.0 billion in 2026/27. Provincial priorities are allocated R42 million, which will be adjusted to R30 million for both the 2025/26 and 2026/27 fiscal years.

Khani Mamba.

Thank you.