

Help for Municipalities to Continue from National Ministers

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National Cabinet Ministers are available to help municipalities even after this round of Imbizos, particularly those municipalities that are still struggling to find ways of effectively channelling service and development within their own area. The Deputy Minister of Science and Technology Mr Derek Hanekom said this at the Municipal Imbizo held in Malatane village, Limpopo. Deputy Minister Hanekom and the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development Brigette Mabandla were visiting Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality on 30 September 2005 as part of the project consolidate municipal imbizos. These are municipalities that are identified as amongst other those that are failing to provide 30% of their required services. In Capricorn District three municipalities are targeted identified under the project Aganang, Blouberg and Lepelle-Nkumpi.

The Mayor of Lepelle-Nkumpi Clr Suzan Chego presented to the ministers the challenges facing her municipality. Although there is significant progress in the delivery of water with 10 000 more households receiving water since 2001, the "challenge is the limited sources of water, implementation of cost recovery measures in rural areas, management of communal water taps and vandalism and illegal connections." Clr Chego further said that the municipality together with the district have allocated R25.9 million in this financial year to ensure that the need for water resources is met. Sanitation still poses a major problem as well as electricity. "Whilst our municipality is better situated within areas of development, agriculture and tourism we have yet to develop a strategy that addresses Local Economic Development, plans to deal with land use management and creation of sustainable jobs," said Clr Chego. The word from both ministers to councillors and ward committee members was that there are resources within Lepelle-Nkumpi that need to be put to good use.

To do this effectively, Minister Mabandla said, " We need to build a unified force of disciplined politicians who see their role as that of deepening the culture of democracy. This area has such great icons as Makgatho, Es'kia Mphahlele, Lilian Ngoyi and others who should inspire you to action." At the end of the meeting it was felt that this was just a beginning to consolidate further interactions. Mabandla even hinted that if there was a need to come back to Lepelle-Nkumpi for shorter discussions and caucuses she will be available to help.

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