

**NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE**



# **DEPARTMENTAL ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2008/09**

**Portfolio Committee and the DACERD 03 NOVEMBER  
2009**

**Hon. Dodo Baloyi (Chairperson)**

**Portfolio Committee on Agriculture**

**Annual Report Briefing by the Department of Agriculture Conservation Environment and Rural Development  
(DACERD) for 2008/2009.**

# **North West Provincial Legislature**

## **Progress Report by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, Environment and Rural Development (DACERD)**

### **1. Introduction**

The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, Environment and Rural Development held a meeting with the Department on 03<sup>rd</sup> November 2009. The purpose of the meeting was for the department to present the annual report for 2008/2009.

### **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the meeting was for the department to present its annual report in order to measure the success they had in previous financial year and identify the challenges that they are still facing in order to find possible solutions and move forward.

### **3. Departmental Presentation**

In their presentation the department highlighted the following challenges faced:

- Shortage of water in Ngaka Modiri Molema District for Taung Irrigation Scheme.
- North West Province is far behind in terms of job creation and also meeting Provincial Growth and Development (PGD) targets.
- Extra ordinary increase of fertilizer that makes it hard for farmers to produce as it becomes expensive i.e. R5000.00 to plough 1 hecter.
- Decline in prices of food production and lack of access to market.
- No funding for rural development for this year (2009).
- R20m held by Provincial Treasury for DED that causes a delay in implementing rural development as well as assisting farmers during this planting season.

#### **4. Concerns raised by the Portfolio Committee**

- In as much as North West Province is top three among other provinces in implementing Rural Development, with regard to support service to the farmers, how is the department monitoring the equipment provided to the communities to ensure that individuals does not own community properties.
- As the department has acknowledged the scarcity of water, is there a strategy to assist the farmers with water.
- Whether the department has a strategy to overcome the stealing of fence.
- Cooperatives conflicts. i.e. plan by the department to tackle this challenge to ensure that established cooperatives are sustainable.
- Withholding of funds from DED to implement Rural Development.
- Stopping of illegal fires that take too long to be responded to.
- Beneficiaries wherein one farmer is allocated with 21 cattle (Nguni cattle).
- 30 beneficiaries on one land for farming.
- Acquisition of land from Land Reform as the farmers are still struggling in terms of land allocation.
- Specific requirements for the farmers to be allocated with land .e.g. business plan, is there a plan for the department to assist the farmers.
- The strategy by the department to address drought relief with high priority.
- Taung Skull Report and recommendations in not reflected in the Annual Report.
- Taung College in terms of readiness for re-opening.
- Funding for unregistered cooperatives which are productive.
- Intervention strategy to address shortage of water in Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District.

- Land that was allocated to a business man in Taung, whether that particular person has vacated the land.
- Clarity as to why the resolutions of SCOPA are not implemented.
- Service providers that are not paid on time.
- Regulatory framework regarding the farmer's animals that are impounded by white farmers.
- Findings on the investigations with regard to the fruitless expenditure in Taung Skull.
- Recommendations of Taung Skull Investigation that were not implemented and use of independent legal advisor over the state law advisor.
- Clarity on Maipi and their engagement with the department with regard to fencing.
- Unlawful procurement processes i.e. the criteria that is used by the department in terms of disciplining the staff with regard to the latter wherein the junior staff are dismissed while the senior staff still remains within the department.
- Nguni Cattle- with regard to the completion of IDC contract, is there a plan to replicate or assist the farmers in order for them to grow.
- National Job Evaluation, how far is the process in terms of implementation and on what percentage is the department with regard to employment equity.
- Movements of funds from one project to another. i.e. possibilities to move DED fund to Rural Development to expedite implementation for farmers to plant.
- Total costs incurred during the cancellation of Female Farmer Awards.

## **5. Responses**

- With regard to monitoring of departmental projects, the farmers are assisted with an intention to give them a start and they are trained on their specific projects and on how they can sustain them. However, extension officers are always available to assist where necessary.

- Awareness campaigns are made to the communities with regard to theft of fence and there is a plan to brand the fence for easy identification.
- There are training programmes that are given to the cooperatives to strengthen their relations in order to sustain their projects even though it remains a big challenge as some people are difficult by nature.
- Support for individual farmers was created by IDC to ensure that the projects are sustainable as groups had failed in the past due to group dynamics.
- The delay to pay creditors is influenced by the national payment process that has to be followed.
- Unlawful procurement process – contained in Taung Skull report.
- Mr. Gaoraewelwe has been issued with a written notification to vacate the land and the department is investigating the amount that might have been lost during his illegal occupancy.
- With regard to response to illegal activities, there is limited personnel provincially and it is challenging to do physical inspection and therefore rely mainly on communities.
- Employment equity, the department is on 1% with regard to employment of disabled people and will submit further information on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010.
- It is difficult to assist unregistered cooperatives as per Industrial Development Cooperation (IDC) requirements.
- A delay with regard to a report on Female Farmer Award cancellation was due to the negotiations with the service providers to reduce the cost and indeed there was a success in terms of costs reduction.

- Regarding movements of funds from one project to another is done only if there is a pressing issue hence awaiting release of R20m from the Provincial Treasury.
- With regard to the use of independent legal advisor over the state law advisor, it is customary and normal for the departments to use private attorneys for various purposes like legal opinions, presiding officers or employee representatives during disciplinary hearings. The Auditor General is satisfied with such service.
- There is sufficient evidence of disciplinary steps being taken against senior managers in the department and they were taken against two Chief Directors during 2007/08 and 2008/09 respectively.
- Maipi is a close corporation owned by Jeffrey Baleseng Mangope. It had the exclusive rights to construct the patented enviro-fencing in the North West Province at the time of its engagement.
- The services of Maipi were taken on the basis of its sole agency and they were the only service providers granted such trading rights (patented rights) by Enviro Fencing South Africa. The procurement was found compliant by the Auditor General.

## **6. Recommendations**

- A letter written to Mr. Gaoraelwe should be attached to the report within the next 14 days.
- With regard to R20m held by Provincial Treasury, the department should submit a plan to enable the Portfolio Committee to assist them to unlock the funds.
- Political heads i.e. MEC Finance, MEC Agriculture and Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee should urgently meet to address the issue of Funds (R20m) in order to assist farmers as it is planting season.

- Implementation of the Taung Skull recommendations by the investigation unit in office of the premier.
- Complete winding down of the DED and placement of staff within the department.
- Submit the memorandum with regard to implementation of national job evaluation.
- Taung Skull fruitless expenditure to be referred to the Public Accounts committee for future business engagements.
- Submit a progress report on the cost reduction of the Female Farmer Awards event which is a fruitless expenditure.

## 7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Portfolio Committee complimented the department for the good presentation and progress made. However, the Portfolio Committee emphasized that there is still a lot that needs to be achieved by the department to ensure the growth and development of the Province. However, the responses to the following questions posed to the department should still be submitted:

- Acquisition of land from Land Reform and requirements for farmers to be allocated with land.
- Strategy for the department to address shortage of water and drought relief.
- Regulatory framework regarding the farmer's animals that are impounded by white farmers.

Signed by:

Date:

03 November 2009

  
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**Hon. Dodo Baloyi**

**Chairperson: Agriculture, Conservation, Environment and Rural Development**