

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

BUDGET SPEECH

2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR BUDGET VOTE

2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR BUDGET SPEECH OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT - VOTE 4



DELIVERED BY THE MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, HON. NANDI NDALANE (MPL) TO THE LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE DATE: 24 MARCH 2022 VENUE: LIMPOPO LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER, LEBOWAKGOMO



Honourable Speaker, Honourable Premier, Honourable Deputy Speaker, Honourable Colleagues in the Executive Council, Chief Whip of the Majority Party, Honourable members of the Provincial Legislature, Leadership of the Ruling Party and other Political Parties present here today, Leadership of the Opposition Party Chairperson of the Agriculture and Rural Development Portfolio Committee, Members of the media, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Ladies and Gentlemen, A very good morning to you all.

I believe I know this as a matter of fact, that the great masses of our people look up to us and particularly to the African National Congress for a better life. This legitimate expectation from our people is a constant reminder that we remain nothing but the servants of the people. We have been given the responsibility of leading this big project whose objective is to eradicate poverty, provide employment opportunities, eliminate inequality and maintain food security amongst others. These important responsibilities clearly indicate the enormity of the work at our disposal, and we dare not fail. Failure to deliver on these objectives will be catastrophic in the lives of our communities. Failure on the other hand will also mean a betrayal of trust that has been bestowed on us by our people. Having said that, we commit to this august house that we shall never fail. Delivery on these objectives non-negotiable.



We appreciate that we are currently operating under difficult conditions of uncertainty brought about by amongst others Covid-19 pandemic and subdued economy. While these are realities of our current circumstances, we draw wisdom from the wise words of former President Mbeki who said: "Those who complete the course will do so only because they do not, as fatigue sets in, convince themselves that the road ahead is still too long, the inclines too steep, the loneliness impossible to bear and the prize of doubtful value."

Madam Speaker

We once again appreciate this opportunity to table the budget and policy priorities for the Department for the 2022/23 financial year to this august house.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the important role that agriculture plays in producing food. It also shone the light on the crucial role that the agricultural sector plays and will continue to play in the economic recovery of the Limpopo Province and South Africa.

Statistical reports indicate that the agricultural sector, one of the critical drivers of the country's economy, registered positive growth in most of the quarters during the midst of COVID-19 pandemic. The positive economic growth in the agricultural sector was attributed to, among others, an increase in field crops, horticultural and animal products.

In overall, the latest report released by Statistics South Africa shows a better economic growth in the fourth quarter of 2021. The sectors that recorded positive economic growth are Agriculture, Trade, Manufacturing and Personal Services. Agriculture expanded by 12.2 percent quarter on quarter, retail trade sales by 2.9 percent, manufacturing by 2.8 percent and Personal Services by 2,7 percent. The growth of Agriculture is attributed mainly to a rise in production of animal products.

The export of vegetables also contributed to an increase of total value exports of goods and services which grew by 8,5 percent.

However, the sporadic electricity, water cut-offs and rising prices of fertilisers and fuel continue to threaten the production output, and in turn growth in the agriculture sector.

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As a country and Province, we are still struggling to grow the economy to the level as required by the National Development Plan (NDP), to attain economic growth of 5 percent for the creation of meaningful sustainable jobs by 2030.

Amidst the devastating effect of the COVID-19 pandemic the national Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan has prioritized interventions to restore the economy and build a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive economy. At provincial level the Provincial Socio-economic Recovery Plan was developed. The Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD) is one of the Departments responsible for leading and contributing towards actualising these recovery plans. During 2021/22 the Department finalised the Revitalization of Agriculture and Agroprocessing Value Chain (RAAVC) Plan. The Plan is aligned to the national Agriculture and Agroprocessing Master Plan (AAMP).

In the State of the Province Address, the Hon Premier, Stanley Chupu Mathabatha has clearly outlined what the RAAVC seeks to achieve, "our plan for the revitalisation of agriculture and agro-processing value chain is anchored on four objectives which include the task to:

- Increase production through revitalisation and expansion of key commodities;
- Ensuring the transformation of the agricultural sector through the promotion and support of Black producers in key commodity industries;
- Increasing the participation of black producers in the domestic and export markers, and;
- Broadening and increasing the participation of black producers in the agricultural value chain.

Hon Speaker, we are therefore confident that with the allocation of twenty-seven million rand (R27 million) for the RAAVC Plan, we are on course towards meeting these objectives.

The implementation of the RAAVC Plan is centred around catalytic mega projects which aim to increase primary agricultural production that is linked to agro-processing and value adding and contribute to job creation and improved rural livelihoods and food security. The implementation follows and is guided by the District Development Model.

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focused attention in the 2021/22 financial year was also on the commencement of some of the mega projects. These projects included Makgoba fruit development under the sub-tropical fruit cluster, revitalisation of Zebediela citrus estate and Limburg citrus estate as part of the citrus cluster and Ga-Moleele potato development under the potato cluster in Capricorn District.

Progress on these projects was not as expected due to several factors which caused delays in the implementation. Factors ranged from a court judgement in relation to the Makgoba project, slow progress in finding solutions for the community disputes at Limburg citrus and procurement challenges in relation to Zebediela and Ga-Moleele. The projects plans will continue in the 2022/23 financial year.

Further to that is Majeje citrus in Ba-Phalaborwa, Tafelkop Farmers Association in Elias Motsoaledi and Tshilwavhusiku Cooperative in Makhado, both under the vegetable cluster, which would also be implemented in the 2022/23 financial year from the ring-fenced RAAVC allocation. Tafelkop Farmers Association and Tshilwavhusiku Cooperative will be supported with irrigation infrastructure and on-farm pack sheds.

Implementation of the citrus cluster is in partnership with the private sector, which include the Impact Catalyst for Zebediela and Limburg projects and Komati Group for Majeje citrus as co-funders.

The Department has also partnered with the Agricultural Research Council on the livestock improvement programme. This programme will contribute to the red meat cluster development in Waterberg. Other partnerships are with the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) and the Agricultural Development Agency. The partnership with the PPECB is to address the challenges of market access, particularly by the previously excluded producers by providing support to enable them to meet the market requirements and obtain necessary certification on General Agricultural Practices (GAP). The partnership with the Agricultural Development Agency is on the mobilisation of resources (financial and technical skills) needed for the broader implementation of the RAAVC Plan. As it is outlined in the RAAVC Plan, these partnerships are very critical and will go a long way in meeting the broader objective of accelerating inclusive economic growth, market access by previously excluded producers, expanding skills base, increasing the sector's potential to create more jobs, and contributing to food security for all.





It is expected that through this development, two thousand one hundred and forty-four (2 144) job opportunities would be created. A total of two hundred and thirty-two (232) current permanent jobs at Zebediela citrus estate would be sustained as well as eight hundred (800) seasonal jobs workers.

Hon Speaker

In 2021 the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and Provincial Departments of Agriculture embarked on a very important programme of developing a comprehensive national register of producers/farmers. The register was developed through a national survey, with special emphasis on smallholder producers/farmers nationwide. This programme was prompted by challenges confronting the sector in terms of lack of consistent, reliable, and accurate data of the smallholder category of farmers/producers across all nine provinces. This challenge often makes it difficult to properly streamline the resources that are needed for effective farmer/producer's support. As stated by the Minister for Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Ms Thoko Didiza during the release of the Producer Farmer Register, the survey was also aimed to *"get data that will tell us where the smallholders are in the outreach, their demographics, production as well as their contribution to employment."*

Minister Didiza further noted "This tool is important because it will enable us as government in terms of support as well as monitoring the performance by government and farmers themselves".

The Producer Farmer Register Report indicates that at the time of the survey, twelve thousand four hundred and eighty-two (12 482) smallholder producers, or 13,1 percent are in Limpopo. The largest number is in Mopani, at four thousand and eighty-two (4 082), followed by Capricorn at three thousand six hundred and sixteen (3 616). Of these numbers, five thousand five hundred and ninety-seven (5 597) are women, constituting 48,8 percent. The number of youth farmers is very low at eight hundred and eleven (811) or 6,5 percent.

Farmers in the age category of 36 – 60 years is four thousand eight hundred and eighty-five (4 885) or 39 percent and 60 years and above is 54 percent. The survey has further shown that only 7 percent of our smallholder farmers are having access to formal markets.

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This data is very critical and will continue to inform our decision making on support interventions across all the categories of farmers.

It is worth noting that this Producer/Farmer Register will be a living document, which will continuously be updated and new entrants into the sector are encouraged to register at our Local Agricultural Offices.

Hon Speaker

The budget allocated to Vote 4: Agriculture and Rural Development for 2022/23 is one billion six hundred and fifty-seven million (R1 657 billion). The Equitable Share allocation constitutes 79,7 percent of the budget and Conditional Grants amount to 20.3 percent. Allow me to elaborate on the budget allocation to the seven programmes of the Department for service delivery during 2022/23 to support the *Vision* of the Department being a "United, prosperous and productive agricultural sector for sustainable rural communities" and the supporting *Mission* which is "to promote food security and economic growth through sustainable agricultural development".

Programme 1: Administration has been allocated three hundred and twenty-six million one hundred and sixty-four thousand rand (R326,164 million) to provide for administrative costs, centralised payments of contractual obligations and the provision of a stable Information Communication Technology network. An amount of ten million rand (R10 million) has been allocated to fund the implementation of COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols to ensure that departmental staff stay safe and protected. Three-million-rand (R3 million) is for the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and seven million rand (R7 million) for the appointment of Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers within Programme 2.

During 2021/22 the Department concluded the review of the Organisational Structure, following extensive consultations. The Organisational Structure was approved in June 2021.

The review took a rigorous approach towards a strategic human resource planning process, which involved analysis of cost drivers, maximising the utilisation of current staff capabilities, and reinforcing integration of expertise across the Department. This culminated in a business case towards human resource efficiency and reduced Compensation of Employees (CoE) cost.

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The commod ity approach system was used to identify Agricultural Development Zones (ADZ), which have been adopted as service delivery points. The structure will be implemented and be operational from the 1st of April 2022. An amount of one billion and forty-seven million (R1.047 billion) will be used to fully fund the Compensation of employees and the implementation of the structure from the 1st of April 2022.

Madam Speaker

Programme 2: Sustainable Resource Use and Management has been allocated sixty-nine million three hundred and sixty-nine thousand rand (R69,369 million) to provide agricultural support services to farmers to ensure that there is sustainable agricultural development and management of natural agricultural resources. This budget includes the allocation for the LandCare, conditional grant and EPWP incentive grant. LandCare has been allocated thirteen million three hundred and three thousand rand (R13 303 million) and EPWP ten million three hundred and sixty-one thousand rand (R10 361 million).

The allocated budget will enable the establishment of forty-eight (48) agricultural infrastructures to support farmers in both crop and livestock production. The Department will continue to ensure that potential arable land is returned back into production. This includes among others the revitalization of irrigation schemes. Although notable progress has been made in this regard, progress at Tswelopele Irrigation Scheme has been slowed down by the community land claims that are still under investigation by the Regional Land Claims Commission. Only three out of four claims have been successfully investigated. In order to limit conflicts amongst the land occupants and claimants, it is prudent to allow the Regional Land Claims Commission time to complete the investigations.

Two hundred and fifty-five (255) hectares will be equipped with infield irrigation system, inclusive of the Mogalatsane Irrigation Scheme where the installation of the system will cover hundred and twenty (120) hectares of land.

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For our producers to thrive in these unfavourable climatic conditions it has become necessary for agriculture as a sector, and LDARD as the responsible Department, to continue with awareness raising regarding climate change and the implementation of climate smart technologies. As a result, twenty-two (22) efficient water use systems will be developed, and twelve (12) environmentally controlled production structures constructed. In line with the departmental priority of reducing vulnerability and risks associated with climate change, one thousand three hundred (1 300) hectares will be rehabilitated, five hundred (500) hectares cultivated under Conservation Agriculture practises and one thousand six hundred (1 600) hectares cleared of alien invasive plants.

Furthermore, one thousand (1 000) farmers will be assisted through disaster relief schemes and five (5) surveys on the uptake of early warning information conducted. These are mechanisms and strategies to assist producers on being resilient, prepared, and able to mitigate and to recover from any form of agricultural disasters within their farming environment. Assisting in these activities will be the EPWP workers, with the target of creating two thousand six hundred (2 600) jobs.

Madam Speaker

Programme 3: Agricultural Producer Support and Development has been allocated nine hundred and two million six hundred and three thousand rand (R902, 603 million). This allocation includes the Comprehensive Agriculture Support (CASP) and Letsema conditional grants. Letsema and CASP grants have been allocated seventy-five million three hundred and thirty-three thousand rand (R75 333 million) and two hundred and thirty-seven million eight hundred and sixteen thousand rand (R237 816 million), respectively. During 2021/22 progress has been made on actualising the purpose of this Programme, being to increase food production through producer support and development initiatives.

Producers in the Cotton Commodity in the Sekhukhune District planted two hundred and seventy (270) hectares of cotton, with a harvest of four hundred and twenty-eight (428) tons, involving hundred and twenty-seven (127) smallholder farmers. Producers in the Red Meat Commodity in the Waterberg District have been supported with, amongst others, border fencing, stock water systems,



animal handling facilities and multi-purpose facility which will also serve as training facility for the farmers.

The Vegetable Cluster in Mopani District was supported through the completion of infrastructure targeting seventy (70) vegetable farmers in the Gravelotte, Selwane and Prisca area, inclusive of shade nets, ablution facilities and on-farm pack sheds. The ablution facilities are very critical as part of enabling the farmers to comply with phytosanitary requirements for food safety.

The farmers in the Potato Belt in Capricorn District were supported with irrigation infrastructure and provision of production inputs.

During 2022/23, in creating an enabling environment for producers at various scales of production, the Department will provide production stock to the total of seventeen thousand (17 000) to farmers. The production stock will consist of two hundred (200) livestock and fifteen thousand (15 000) animal breeding stock. The Department will increase participation of producers in the integrated value chain through support to five thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine (5 729) producers across different commodity groups, including the Vegetables and Sub-tropical fruits.

The province currently has Farmer Production Support Units (FPSUs) in three districts, at various levels of progress, namely: Masala FPSU in Mopani District, Vleischboom FPSU in Sekhukune District and Witpoort FPSU in Waterberg District. The progress has not been at the expected rate due to various challenges, including the very slow progress on the electricity connection at Vleischboom. Construction of the Witpoort FPSU started in December 2021.

Hon Speaker,

Capacity building of the farmers and producers in general remain central to their success in their operations. To this end, a total of nine hundred and fifty (950) producers will be trained and eight hundred and sixty-five (865) producers will be capacitated through demonstrations and facilitation of two hundred and thirty-seven (237) Farmers' Days. Food security for all is a must, as enshrined in our Bill of Rights. To contribute towards the fulfilment of this constitutional right, we will support five

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hundred and seventy six (576) small holder producers and three thousand one hundred and sixty-five (3 165) subsistence producers across our Province.

As part of the sector transformation, and to contribute to the reduction of youth unemployment, the programme of placing unemployed agriculture graduates on commercial farms will continue. The 2021/22 cohort placed in August 2021 will continue with their two-year programme which is to end in 2023/24.

Hon Speaker

We wish to highlight that this programme is really making a difference. We can report that from the first cohort of the graduates, fourteen (14) agricultural enterprises have been formed, owned by some of the graduates and are successfully operating. They are receiving support from the Department and the industry.

I would like to also to share with the house a success story of a young entrepreneur in the farming business. Frank Matsha (26) is from Indermark in Bochum, Limpopo, where he was born and raised. He is the owner of Bohlale Farming Project. He started farming in September 2020 after the completion of his three-year diploma in farming management at Vhembe College. The farming management course was divided into two parts: The first fifteen months being theory, while the last fifteen months were practicals which he performed at Scrabje Boerdery. Matsha cultivates a wide range of vegetables, including eggplant, chilies, and spinach on his two-hectare plot. It is within a space of a year after he has started with his farming enterprise, yet he is already supplying some of the biggest retail stores in the area. He supplies spinach to Boxer and Spar SaveMor stores in Bochum and Vivo. Eggplants are sold at the Johannesburg Market. He was also approached by the Galitos outlet in the area to supply them with his giant spinach.

The hard work of Frank Matsha has not gone unnoticed. He has been offered an opportunity by a cultural exchange, work, and travel company to travel to the United States of America to ply his trade on a short-term contract.

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(Information courtesy from foodformzansi.co.za).

Madam Speaker

Programme 4: Veterinary Services has been allocated one hundred and fifteen million nine hundred and sixty-three thousand rand (R115,963 million) to render veterinary services.

The resources for this Programme have been augmented with both human and financial resources to manage the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). The persistent presence of FMD in the Province continues to be of a serious concern, not just for Limpopo, but South Africa at large. This is because of the economic impact the disease is having on the agricultural sector in terms of trade bans, as well as domestic markets that are affected by restricted movement of cloven hooved animals. The efforts of the Department are directed towards minimising the risks of future outbreaks. This includes, among others, effective surveillance programmes and other prevention measures such as adherence to regulatory animal inspections, vaccination schedules within the FMD control zones and animal movement control.

On ensuring the adherence to biosecurity regulations and policies, the Department, together with the livestock industry and our communities, must strengthen measures for the control of animal diseases that are of economic impact. Our province has become synonymous with FMD. The proximity we have with the Kruger National Park, which is the habitat of the buffalos, requires us to always be alert and to put requisite measures to prevent the infection. Once the infection is spotted it must be dealt with swiftly to prevent the spread, particularly into the free zone area.

We will therefore continue to solicit resources, financially, through our Provincial Treasury in order to be able to timeously carry out the critical control and prevention measures. These prevention measures are mainly vaccination sessions, conducting surveillance and blood sampling of the target areas, and construction of animal handling facilities at the affected inspection points.

Awareness raising through information sessions for our livestock farmers, especially in the red and yellow zones, is continuing. We are also working on improving our veterinary laboratories through infrastructure and equipment upgrading. The aim is to





bring them to the required standards for accreditation though the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS).

We have so far, within the resources at our disposal, managed to vaccinate thirty-six thousand four hundred and fifty-six (36 456) cattle in Vhembe District and thirty thousand six hundred and seventy-eight (30 678) in Mopani District during the 2021 campaign. The campaign commenced in June and ended in October 2021.

For 2022/23, over and above the two hundred and twenty-two (222) vaccinations for FMD, our Veterinary Team will also visit fifteen thousand two hundred (15 200) epidemiological units for veterinary interventions. Four thousand five hundred (4 500) dipping sessions on communal cattle will be carried out.

We will be recruiting three (3) State Veterinary doctors for Vhembe District, Mopani District and for Mokopane Laboratory, five (5) Control Animal Health Technicians and 7 Animal Health Technicians. This will go a long way in improving the capacity in our Veterinary Services Unit.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that the Limpopo public consumes safe meat, four hundred and eighty (480) inspections will be conducted on the facilities producing meat and thirty thousand (30 000) laboratory tests performed according to the approved standards.

Madam Speaker

Programme 5: Research and Technology Development Services has been allocated fifty-four million five hundred and eleven thousand rand (R54,511 million) to render agricultural research services and development of information systems about agricultural and natural resource utilization technologies.

To enhance research and development twelve (12) research projects will be implemented to improve agricultural production and technology transfer services will consist of twenty-one (21) interventions.

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Madam Speaker

Programme 6: Agricu Itural Economic Services has been allocated forty-eight million five hundred and thirty-three thousand rand (R48,533 million) to provide timely and relevant agricultural economic services to the agricultural sector in support of sustainable agricultural and agri-business development to increase economic growth. Within the budget allocation of this Programme is the funding of projects in line with the RAAVC Plan, totalling twenty-seven million and nine hundred and thirty thousand rand (R27.930 million).

The Department will periodically provide strategic sector performance analysis of different economic indicators and commodities and support one agro-processing initiative.

Access to formal markets by smallholder framers remains one of the critical success factors for their farming enterprises. The market standards certification programme to improve farmers access to local and international markets will continue. This support is assisting the farmers on phytosanitary measures to comply with General Agricultural Practices (GAP) for purposes of GAP certification through PPECB.

In 2021/22, five (5) farms have been certified (three in Vhembe, one in Mopani and one in Capricorn). Seventeen (17) farms have been pre-audited and intervention plans have been developed for those who were found to be non-compliant. Interventions are in the form of requisite infrastructure and training on pre- and post-harvest handling of products. In 2022/23, twenty (20) farms will be audited for compliance.

Madam Speaker

Programme 7: Agricultural Education and Training receives an allocation of one hundred and forty million one hundred and thirty-one thousand rand (R140,131 million) to cater for the two Colleges of Agriculture in the Province.

Eighty (80) students are targeted to graduate with an agricultural qualification and four hundred (400) producers will be trained in skills development programmes in the agricultural sector.

LDARD 2022/23 BUDGET ALLOCATION

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Programme R thousand	2022/23	Percentage Share
Administration	326,164	19.7%
Sustainable Resource Use and Management	69,369	4.2%
Agriculture Producer Support and Development	902,603	54.5%
Veterinary Services	115,963	7.0%
Research and Technology Development Services	54,511	3.3%
Agricultural Economics Services	48,533	2.9%
Agricultural Education and Training	140,131	8.5%
Total payments and estimates	1,657,274	100.0%

R thousand	2022/23	
Equitable Share	1,320,46	
Conditional Grant	336,813	
Land Care	13,303	
EPWP	10,361	
CASP	237,816	
Letsema	75,333	
Total payments and estimates	1,657,274	

Agriculture as an economic sector has demonstrated admirable resilience having assisted in economic recovery following the depressing period of Covid-19 pandemic. Although we are not out of the woods yet we can confidently say this important sector needs our support, hard work and dedication if we are going to fully realise economic turnaround.

Many thanks to our farmers and farm workers who despite covid-19 restrictions steered the agriculture ship through turbulent waters. We remain confident that this sector will contribute immensely to the eventual economic recovery in our country and province.

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Much appreciated to the guidance and support given to us by the head of the Executive, Premier, Stanley Chupu Mathabatha.

The Premier continued giving us hope when hope appeared to be fading when we were going through difficult times. We trust that through your wisdom our sector with continue thriving. Many thanks to my colleagues in the executive council for maintaining teamwork and support which continues to strengthen us in our daily endeavours. I would further like to express gratitude to members of the portfolio committee who consistently put us on our toes ensuring that we use public resources responsibly following all prescripts to the benefit of our people. I will be making a cardinal mistake if I cannot applaud and thank members of team Agriculture and Rural Development led by our capable hardworking Head of the Department, Ms Ramatsimele Jacqueline Maisela for always going extra mile and insisting on the highest standards possible in the service of our people. The results are there for everybody to see. We are forging ahead. We continue to be guided by the oath we have taken when we assumed these responsibilities.

Until we meet all our objectives as promised to the people, we shall not spare any effort, we shall strive withing our means to eventually attain a better for the masses of our people

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Thank you



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VHEMBE DISTRICT

Makwarela Government Complex: Sibasa, Tel: 015 963 2005

MOPANI DISTRICT

Old Parliamentary Building: Giyani, Tel: 015 812 3210

WATERBERG DISTRICT

84 River Street, NTK Building,Modimolle, Corner Thabo Mbeki & Limpopo Street: Tel: 015 491 4973

CAPRICORN DISTRICT

Public Works Complex Building, Lebowakgomo Zone A,

Tel: 015 632 8600

SEKHUKHUNE DISTRICT

Public Works Complex Building, Lebowakgomo Zone A,

Tel: 015 632 8600