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**Keynote Address by MEC Responsible for Social Development, Ms Nontobeko Vilakazi at the Commemoration of the International day for the Eradication of Poverty**

**Richmond**

**31 October 2023**

**Programme Director**

**Executive Mayor of Pixley ka Seme District Municipality, Cllr Itumeleng**

**Mayor, Jantjies**

**Speaker**

**Councillors present**

**Clergy Present**

**Officials from respective Government Departments**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Vandag is vir my ‘n baie blye dag om weereens met die gemeenskap van Richmond bymekaar te kom en dit wanneer ons een van die belangrike dae op ons kalender waar te neem. Dis nie ‘n viering nie, want armoede is geen rede om te herdenk of te vier nie.

Dames en here, hierdie bied aan ons die geleentheid om ware introspeksie te doen en dit bied ook aan ons die realiteit van wat die impak van armoede en die samehangende gevolge daarvan is.

In ons daaglikese interaksie met mense- en Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling is die Departement wat met die menslike faktor werk- kan ons dit nie mis kyk dat armoede ‘n werklikheid is dit het daadwerklike aandag nodig. Maar dit is nie net Regerings probleem alleen nie. Dit is ‘n “ons almal probleem” en een wat vra vir samewerking en samehorigheid.

Ladies and gentlemen, poverty is not only about not having enough money to meet basic needs including food, clothing and shelter.  However, poverty is more, much more than just not having enough money.

The World Bank Organization describes poverty in this way:

*“Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time.*

*Poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways.  Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape. So poverty is a call to action -- for the poor and the wealthy alike -- a call to change the world so that many more may have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities.”*

In addition to a lack of money, poverty is about not being able to participate in recreational activities; not being able to send children on a day trip with their schoolmates or to a birthday party; not being able to pay for medications for an illness.  These are all costs of being poor. Those people who are barely able to pay for food and shelter simply can’t consider these other expenses.  When people are excluded within a society, when they are not well educated and when they have a higher incidence of illness, there are negative consequences for society.  We all pay the price for poverty.  The increased cost on the health system, the justice system and other systems that provide supports to those living in poverty has an impact on our economy.

While much progress has been made in measuring and analyzing poverty, the World Bank Organization is doing more work to identify indicators for the other dimensions of poverty.  This work includes identifying social indicators to track education, health, access to services, vulnerability, and social exclusion.

The theme for this years observation of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is “Decent Work and Social Protection: Putting Dignity in Practice for All”.

En dit is nie net blote toeval dat ons in Richmond is om hierdie dag met die mense van die Pixley ka Seme Distrik te deel nie. Die Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling doen gestand aan die belofte van die tema en ons het na van die verste uithoeke van die Provinsie gekom om hierdie bewusmakingsveldtog met u te deel.

Dames en here, dit is ‘n werklikheid dat die Regering met al ons goeie bedoelings en wetlike voorskrifte nie daartoe instaat is om alleen hierdie draak van armoede kan oorwin nie. Ons kan nie, ten spyte van die magdom planne en werklike hulpverleningsveldtogte, allen na elke hoekie van hierdie groot provinsie gaan en die mees egtergeblewe mensie kan verhef bo armoede. Dis ‘n droom wat elke land en wereld leier droom, maar die werklikheid is ons kan net soveel vermag. Ons het mekaar nodig en dit is daarom nou meer nodig as ooit dat ons onself nie net verbind en vereenselwig met die beginsels van Ubuntoe nie, maar da tons dit leef in ons daaglike bedrywighede.

As deel van ons strategie om armode te beveg is om in dialog met mekaar te tree en om ons ondervindinge met mekaar ted eel. Dit veries ook da tons alle sektore betrek in ons strewe om ‘n inklusiewe en vooruitstrewende samelewing daar te stel. Dit verg dat ons saam werk, saam bou, saam bid en in harmonie met mekaar lewe

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty can strongly complement such initiatives because it aims to ensure that the active participation of people living in extreme poverty and those furthest behind is a driving force in all efforts made to overcome poverty, including in the design and implementation of programmes and policies which affect them. Only by creating and nurturing a genuine partnership with people living with poverty will it be possible to build an inclusive world where all people can enjoy their full human rights and lead lives with dignity.

There is no one cause of poverty, and the results of it are different in every case. Poverty varies considerably depending on the situation. Feeling poor in Canada is different from living in poverty in Russia or Zimbabwe.  The differences between rich and poor within the borders of a country can also be great.

Despite the many definitions, one thing is certain; poverty is a complex societal issue. No matter how poverty is defined, it can be agreed that it is an issue that requires everyone’s attention.  It is important that all members of our society work together to provide the opportunities for all our members to reach their full potential. It helps all of us to help one another

Dames en here, oor die afgelope paar jaar het dit al hoe meer duidelik geword dat ‘n nuwe benadering tot gemeenskaps ontwikkeling benodig word om werklik mense se lewens te verander soos dit in die Grondwet vervat is.

Ons geliefde ontslape oud President Nelson Mandela het dit onomwonde gestel dat die sukses tot al ons pogings om gemeenskaps opheffing te implimenteer daarin lê dat daar aktiewe en daarwerklike gemeenskaps deelname moet wees.

Dit is daarom dat ons die “neem Sosiale Dienste na mense” veldtog in alle erns en mag versterk en implimenteer. Ons duidelike fokus en versterking berus op arm en weerlose gemeenskappe.

Ons navorsing het duidelik bepaal dat indien plaaslike gemeenskappe die nodige hulp en onderskraging kry, is hulle in n beter posisie om hul eie sosiale en ontwikkelings probleme aan te spreek en te oorkom. Ons is vandag hier- as die werkende ANC beleerde Regering om gestand te doen aan ons belofte om ons mense eerste te plaas. Ons is bereid om die pad saam met U te stap want glo my ons ken armoede en wat dit aan die gees kan doen. Ons het ‘n wrede en onregverdige stelsel van Apartheid beveg en oorwin en as ons saam staan soos in ons stryd teen Apartheid sal ons ook armoede kan beveg.

Werkloosheid onder jongmense bly kommerwekkend vir ons as Regering. Ten spite van goeie onderwys en ondersteuningsprogramme wat hierdie Departement lewer vind ons steeds dat ons ‘n groot gebrek aan vaardighede het. Hoewel universiteite met ‘n indrukwekkende aantal inskrywings uit voorheenbenadeelde gemeenskappe spog, is daar ongelukkig baie jong mense wat nie hul studies voltooi en werkloos bly.

Hierdie toedrag van sake het ook ander problem tot gevolg. Dit is teleurstellend dat baie van hierdie jongmense wat werkloos is, vasgevang word in kriminele bedrywighede soos bendeaktiwiteite, dwelmgebruik en die verkoop daarvan en ander maatskaplike euwels wat liefs kon gebly het. As ons daaraan dink om armoede en ongelykheid hok te slaan moet ons begin om vaardighede aan te leer wat ten doel het om die gemeenskappe waarin ons bly op te hef. Jongmense kan net sowel die energie en vaardighede wat dit vat om in kriminele aktiwiteite betrokke te raak aanwend om armoede te beveg.

Ladies and gentlemen, community development requires passionate and knowledgeable people. In this regard, we will continue to train community development practitioners in areas of integrated development planning to ensure that social development services are not neglected at local municipal level.

A number of research publications state that young people constitute the majority of South Africa’s population. The youth bulge represents both a challenge and an opportunity for South Africa.

The National Development Plan (Vision 2030) advocates for the prioritisation of policies that will improve the capacities and life chances of our country’s youthful population.

Dit bly egter die jeug se verantwoordelikheid om self na hul toekoms te kyk en die besluit te neem om ‘n positiewe bydrae te maak tot die samelewing. Die verslag wat ek ontvang het is dat jong mense kla oor die gebrek aan fasiliteite en hierdie gebruik as ‘n verdedigbare verskoning om hulle te vergooi aan drank en ander verslawende middels.

Die gebruik van hierdie verslawende middels het ‘n wye en bose nadraai. Families in geheel word negatief geraak hierdeur. Ons sien ook ‘n groot aanname in die getal jong mense wat vroeg skool verlaat en dan verval en agteruitgaan. Tiener swangerskappe en hoë syfers van HIV infeksies kan as ‘n direkte resultaat van hierdie onverantwoordelike lewensstyl afgemaak word.

The Department of Social development has many programmes and interventions to promote the ideal of responsible and healthy families. This initiative is but one of many that we, in collaboration with stakeholders, implemented. This is based on the major challenges as identified by the community, focusing on alcohol and drug abuse which leads to poor family interpersonal relations, poor school attendance, and challenging behaviour of children, child neglect, family violence and mismanagement of income.

Family preservation programmes such as Parenting Skills, Active Parenting of Teenagers, Relationship Strengthening Programmes and Behaviour Management, Ke Moja Programs will be intensified through this partnership with Boitumelo.

Within the context of service delivery, as mandated by the different Departments and stakeholders, the main focus will be to strengthen and preserve families so as to enable them to rebuild their inner strength and to sustain their families.

Ladies and gentlemen, eradicating poverty requires economic growth that is inclusive and sustainable. This means stimulating the economic sectors where the poor work; investing in quality social and physical infrastructure where the poor live; and providing the minimum essential levels of basic services for health and education, access to safe water and sanitation in those areas.

Soos u bewus is was die Provinsiale Regering die afgelope tyd baie besig in Richmond en as n Regering het ons baie dienste gebring en ook bemagtigings projekte hier kom instel. Verskeie mense het baat gevind deur die hulp in die vorm van befondsing, nie lenings nie, maar geld wat aan klein besighede voorsien is om hulle aktief te kry en help om by te dra aan die ekonomie van die streek. Die voordeel van hierdie projekte is dat dit die geleentheid skep om mense van werk te voorsien om na hul befoeftes om te sien.

Al is dit tydelike werk en teen minimum vergoeding, stel dit mense instaat om kos op die tafel te sit en ook te voorsien in ander noodsaaklikhede. Die samewerking van verskeie staats departemente verseker dat ons beter gesondheidsdienste, paaie, ekonomiese ontwikkeling, werkskepping en kwaliteit onderwys het. Dit is die kontrak wat die ANC Regering met U het en ons het ons tot nou toe, tot die beste van ons vermoe voldoen aan die kontrak. En ek kan U verseker dit is slegs die ANC Regering wat dit voluit sal doen. Om dienste aan almal te lewer.

On this International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, let us celebrate the success of this caring government achieved in pulling so many out of poverty and we recommit ourselves to doing more and even better for you as we will continue to work tirelessly in eradicating poverty in our generation.

Thank you