



Tekulima Nentfutfuko

Agriculture and Development

3rd Quarter 2011/12

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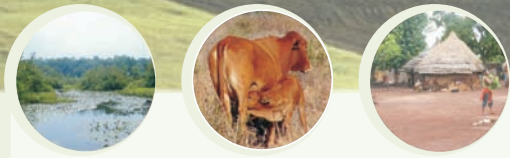
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dardla
Department:
Agriculture, Rural Development
and Land Administration
MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT





DARDLA AWARDS OUTSTANDING FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS

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Ms. Elizabeth Smit receives an award for Top Entrepreneur Small Holder in Aqua Culture



Ms. Constance Mthombeni receives an award for Best Worker



Ms. Poppy Masilela receives an award for Best Worker, Position 2



Traditional dances from Mkhondo entertaining the audience

In an effort to honor female farmers in the province the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration hosted the 12th Female Entrepreneur Awards at Piet Retief, Mkhondo Municipality on 29 November 2011.

The awards were incepted in 1999 to encourage, promote and reward female farmers. In the difficult business of farming, the awards stand out as a major highlight as they recognize the rise of female farmers in the previously male-dominated farming industry.

In his welcoming address, Mkhondo Local Municipality Mayor Cllr BH Mtshali, saluted female farmers for their efforts in uplifting farming in the province and referred

to the farmers as agricultural activists. He further encouraged seasoned farmers to jump on board and support female farmers so as to promote agriculture in the province.

The Honourable MEC Mrs Candith Mashego-Dlamini delivered the keynote address for the evening, placing great emphasis on the role played by women in agriculture. According to the MEC, government needs to create access to government programs such as black economic empowerment for women to benefit.

“Having played a major role in the creation of structures like Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (WARD), the women are showing great interest and dedication in the

sector; therefore with support from government a lot can be achieved”, said the MEC. She further stated that empowering women in agriculture is one of government's main priorities with the creation of the awards bearing testimony to that fact.

The awards were divided into six categories with four nominees in each. The categories were; Best Female worker in the sector, Best Subsistence Producer, Top Entrepreneur- Commercial, Top Entrepreneur-Processing, Top Entrepreneur-Small Holder, Top and Top Entrepreneur-Export Markets.

Numerous sponsors were on board to support the awards and they were; Afgri, Baydrive, Colani, Hot

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To Go, JWL, Kanjani, Allies, Mando Construction, Phumle Khaya, Stelet Trust, TSB and Vodacom.

Constance Mthombeni from Nkangala scooped the best worker award and Mahlweni Ndiya was declared best subsistence producer. The Small Holder Top Entrepreneur award went to

Elizabeth Smit whilst the Best Processer award went to Sizakancane, a charcoal producing firm. Twee Fontein Farm for forestry won under Top Entrepreneur, Commercial and the Best Exporter award went to Wilna Ackhurst for cattle breeding.

The MEC's Award went to charcoal



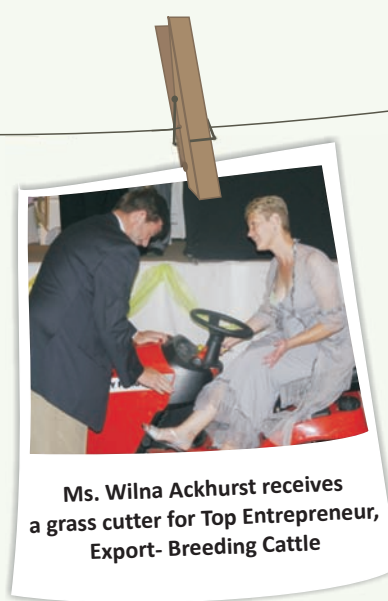
producing Sizakancane and the overall winner, which is Best Female Entrepreneur award, went to Elizabeth Smit for aqua culture. According to the MEC the programme should not be seen as merely a prize-giving ceremony but a long-term investment by the department.



Ms. Ndziya Mahlweni receives an award for Best Subsistence Producer in Vegetable Production



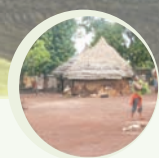
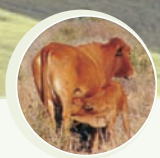
Ms. Dikeledi Swathe receives an award for Best Subsistence Producer, Position 2



Ms. Wilna Ackhurst receives a grass cutter for Top Entrepreneur, Export- Breeding Cattle



Charcoal producing firm Sizakacane receives an Award for Top Entrepreneur, Commercial



TAKING LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE

Siphiwe Sithole

The Mpumalanga Members of the Legislature in conjunction with the National Council of Provinces delegates (NCOP) undertaken an intensifying oversight visit to foster service delivery on 13th and 14th September 2011 at Dr J.S Moroka Municipality.

The Economic Transformation Cluster took an oversight visit to projects of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land

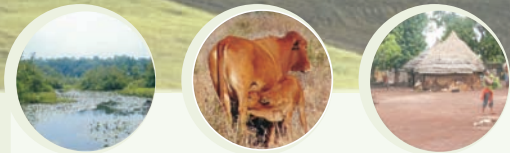
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Administration (DARDLA); the first oversight visit took place at the Itereleng Poultry Project in Manganagobuswa.

Itereleng is a poultry project consisted of 16 beneficiaries, with five members not active due to the lack of cohesion amongst themselves. The first segment of the project commenced in 2007/8 funded

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Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Mr. Fish Mahlalela; Mr. LT Maabane, Chairperson Public Participation and Petition Portfolio Committee Member of Parliament- and Mr. Meshack Malinga MPL-Whip



Ga-Morwe Community members

by the department through the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP).

Two fully equipped layer houses were constructed with the potential to accommodate 1000 chickens and 900 egg trays and drinkers. The funding further allowed them to drill a borehole that was equipped with an electric pumping machine and to purchase a JOJO tank. The second phase made provision of a drainage system and it was handed over to the beneficiaries in 2010.

However, on a way to success there are always challenges to divert the desired objective; the crucial identified dispute was the infighting which leads to disentanglement.

A certain number of the beneficiaries who decided to abandon the project formed part in the stealing of the equipment and infrastructure including the theft of JOJO tank, electric pumping machine, electricity cables, curtains, 5x doors, 12x roofing sheets and 10x bags cement. The project had lack

of funds to replace the stolen equipments and infrastructure and interference from the municipality councilors led to renovating and leasing the project to someone without the permission of the original beneficiaries.

Nevertheless the department (DARDLA) saw it fit to intervene and engage in terms of making sure that the project does not paralyse, the HOD Ms NL Sithole of DARDLA assured the Members of Parliament and the NOCP that community mobilization will be conducted, and that the project will be brought back to life.

The department also promised to develop a business plan for the mop-up of the project. Through the Project Management Unit (MPU) the department is planning to fund the project in the next financial year and officials will constantly hold talks with the beneficiaries to resolve internal conflicts which will introduce an exclusive turnaround strategy to ensure the sustainability of the project.





DARDLA SHINES YET AGAIN IN THE KAMOSO AWARDS

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The Department of Agriculture Rural Development and Land Administration (DARDLA) was honoured once again for its sterling performance in reporting the best projects under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the provincial KAMOSO Awards.

In his keynote address the Minister, for the National Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, Honourable Thulas Nxesi, expressed gratitude to all the participants of the KAMOSO awards for their exceptional contribution towards improving the lives of the people in the province.

Martha Kalogwile, a Project Coordinator responsible for reporting jobs created through the EPWP in the Department of Agriculture Rural Development and Land Administration could not conceal her excitement after receiving the news that her department has done it again.

The best projects under the EPWP were awarded for their positive contribution towards job creation and uplifting service delivery to improve the lives of the poor in various communities. The KAMOSO Awards took place on the 4th November 2011, at Emalahleni.

DARDLA was one of the twenty two (22) participants awarded in various categories and the two time recipient of the best reporting institution in Best Programme Environment and Culture Sector in the consecutive years. In addition, to this award the department also walk away with the award for the Best Programme Environment and Culture for the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme. This year's overall winner was taken by the Department of Education for the best performing institution.

The Provincial KAMOSO Awards is an annual event organised by the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, in bid to recognize excellence on the implementation of the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) and to showcase the best performing project in the province.



MEC for Public Works Roads and Transport Dikeledi Mahlangu, Dr, Lucas Cele-DARDLA, Minister of Public Works, Roads and Transport Thulas Nxesi, Nkangala District Executive Mayor Speedy Mashelo and Cllr Ms. Salome Sithole

“We acknowledge your hard work, dedication and commitment towards the advancement of a better life for all,” said Nxesi. He added that the department was increasing the incentive in order to attract more institutions to enter the programme.

“We want to encourage other departments to minimize issuing tenders as it only benefits individuals, instead we want to train more people so that they are able to take part in community projects. Since the inception of EPWP phase 2, two years ago, there are 1 million job opportunities which have been created,” concluded Nxesi.

She said she was happy and excited to be awarded the awards again. She added that she was dedicating the awards to those officials that were consistently reporting their projects on time.

“I salute them. Due to their effective reporting the department has been receiving recognition and incentives in the past two quarters. Though the department is excelling in reporting, it was still faced with the following challenges, late reporting, colleagues not keeping

documentations for projects and project managers not taking up their responsibility of reporting on time,” said the dedicated Ms Kalogwile.

She encouraged officials to always keep the project file for every project. The file must consist of: the beneficiary ID Copy, Daily attendance register, weekly payment register, and project profiles.

Dr Lucas Cele, Nkangala District Manager for DARDLA attended the event and collected the awards on behalf of department.

All the winners will represent the Department of Public of Works, Roads and Transport at the national competition.





DON'T LOOK AWAY

ACT AGAINST ABUSE



DARDLA CARES ABOUT THE WELLBEING OF THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Patrick Nyathi

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The Department of Agriculture Rural Development and Land Administration (DARDLA) joined all South Africans and global communities in commemorating the 16 Days of Activism for No violence against women and children abuse. The 16 Days campaign generates awareness of the impact of violence on women, children and society as a whole. The Department aimed at contributing to the government's primary developmental objective of restoring individual's human dignity within the context of safer and more secure families and communities.

As children abuse is known to be at its peak in rural areas, and this has prompted the DARDLA to host their event at Bushbuckridge Municipality in one of the remotest areas known as Werverdiend.

Child abuse is more than bruises and broken bones. While physical abuse might be the most visible sign, other types of abuse such as emotional abuse or child neglect also leave deep, long lasting scars. Some signs of child abuse are subtler than others. However, by learning common types of abuse and what you can

do, you can make a huge difference in a child's life said the acting Mayor Cllr Thapelo Shabangu. He further said the earlier abused children get help, the greater chance they have to heal from their abuse and not perpetuate the cycle.

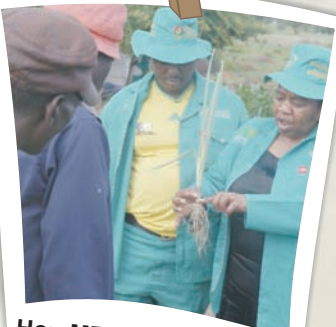
Child neglect is said to be the common abuse of children practiced by many areas be it intentionally or unintentionally. Child neglect refers to the failure to provide for the shelter, safety, supervision and nutritional needs of the child. It may be as well physical, educational, or emotional neglect: This abuse is commonly practiced in many remote areas, at times you find parents sending children to roam around the streets and sell either fruits or vegetables for money that will be used for household consumption. Indirectly that child becomes a bread winner of the family at an early stage.

This practice infringes the right to Education for children because such children will be required not to go to school, in order to sell to support their families. Educational neglect includes the allowance of chronic truancy, failure to enrol a child of mandatory school age in school, and failure to attend to a special educational need.





Workers at Khomani Valhu in Bushbuckridge welcome MEC Mashego-Dlamini



Hon MEC demonstrating how to plant onions



Both HOD and MEC helped plant veggies at Khomani Valhu



MEC Mashego-Dlamini and HOD Nelisiwe Sithole laying bricks for the construction of a kitchen at God's Will Disable Centre

Cllr Shabangu from Bushbuckridge municipality concluded by calling all men and women to pay special attention to the needs of the children and avoid subjecting the children to abuse. "Parents must play their role of providing for the psychological and emotional needs of their children and protect them from abuse and abusers.

construction of a kitchen for the Centre.

Indeed this was a good day for the people of the centre as the beneficiaries were afforded an opportunity to interact with the dignitaries from different departments, Bushbuckridge Municipality having organised them a braai. This was of course an early Christmas for the kids at the GOD's Will Disable Centre.

Since the event was a joint commemoration of 16 Days of no violence against women and children abuse and people living with disabilities and those affected with HIV and AIDS, the Department also payed special attention to these people where GOD's Will Disable Centre at Werverdiend was identified and different services were rendered. DARDLA MEC Mrs Cadith Mashego-Dlamini handed over a borehole, fencing, and farming inputs to the centre as a legacy project. The departmental officials also donated different items in the form of blankets, clothes and material for the



Ms. Hlamalani Mapholi, shows honour to elders Venda style



Children and staff at God's Will Disable Centre



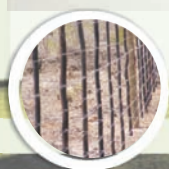
Hon MEC and HOD hand out blankets to the children of God's Will Disable Centre



DARDLA delegates together with MEC Mashego-Dlamini demonstrate the successful completion of a borehole at God's Will Disable Centre



HOD NL Sithole hands over a Certificate of appreciation to Ms. P Siwelane from the Department of Social Services



INDIAN SILK

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The success of Sericulture in India has inspired the twenty emerging farmers from the Mpumalanga Province to invest in efforts to look into the possibility of starting the agro-based rural industry at a large scale in the province.

Sericulture is credited for generating job opportunities for a significant number of rural communities on the strength of being a high income industry which exports cocoon to be used to manufacture a variety of silk products.

Sericulture is the practice of producing raw silk material by rearing silkworms using mulberry leaves on which they feed. When they have reached a certain stage of growth, the worms spin until a cocoon is formed around them. The

cocoon is boiled, killing the worm inside it and the soft outer part of the cocoon is then used to produce silk.

Currently sericulture is not widely practiced in South Africa and emerging farmers could occupy the space that exists, taking into account the extent of spin-offs that could be created from it.

The farmers and officials- on an exchange programme in India-were there to learn the best practices used by India farmers who are known to use ordinary but highly effective methods of farming. The programme is part of the Department of Agriculture, Land Administration's (DARDLA) bid to strengthen the skills of farmers and officials in the province.

The farmers, who are half-way through their three-week's visit in Kuppam, South India, visited several projects, one of which was a Sericulture project that belonged to a local youth who was making a name for himself in the industry.

As simple as their methods of farming are, the Indian farmers reaped the rewards of using them as their production is increasing and its quality continuously improving. Another noteworthy achievement is the reduction in cost of production, which may be a serious stumbling block for many rural farmers.

Deputy Director for DARDLA's Planning Directorate, Mr Bonginkosi Shongwe, said Sericulture was not widespread in the Mpumalanga Province, except for one that exists just outside Nelspruit. To chart a way forward, Mr Shongwe said as the Department they were keen on



Two women working with cocoons from which silk is made and sold to manufacture a range of silk products

researching how many, if any, projects involved in Sericulture exist with a view to initiate such projects in the province and assist those that are already operating.

"I think there is a real chance that exists which we can explore here. Most of South African farmers and those that I know of in the Mpumalanga Province are big on livestock and crop farming. What we have seen in India has made us to think of the possibility of closing the gap that exist here in as far as Sericulture is concerned," Shongwe said.

DARDLA's Chief Director for Research and Structured Training, Mr Stemmer Ndala, said the experiences that farmers and officials have had must in real terms breathe life into farming in the Mpumalanga Province, adding that there must be a leap forward in the way we do agriculture and that this must start happening now.

Mr Ndala said DARDLA was keenly interested on seeing agriculture moving forward in the province and addressing challenges such as food insecurity, which, if adequately addressed, would significantly contribute to alleviating other social ills.

He said: "The department will not be frozen in the past but will continue to seek new and innovative ways of addressing our challenges. The farmer exchange programme, we believe, will take us forward as we strive to chart a course to comprehensive rural development in the province."



From left to right: Mr. Solomon Masango, Mr. Makhosini Dlamini and Mr. Masombuka visiting the sericulture project in Kuppam



Two women working with cocoons from which silk is made and sold to manufacture a range of silk products



MPUMALANGA FARMERS' VISITS PROJECTS IN INDIA

Siphiwe Sithole

The agricultural sector in the Mpumalanga Province was given an impetus to become a leading engine of poverty reduction and job-creation. This is thanks to the sharing of ideas between South African emerging farmers and farmers from the villages of Kuppam South of India.

Twenty emerging farmers from various districts of the Mpumalanga Province are on their second week of the three weeks exchange programme in India to learn the farming techniques used by Indian farmers for increased food security. The programme is the brainchild of the collaboration between the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration (DARDLA) and Healthy Agro Group, which facilitated the visit to India by farmers and departmental officials.

Kuppam, which in less than twenty years back was the scene of impoverished families, lacking the most basic infrastructure, is now almost on an equal footing with the metropolis of India. This is the result of the priority that was accorded to the agricultural sector as a key driver of change.

In her policy and budget speech earlier this year, MEC Mashego-Dlamini, said skills development, especially for the youth, was placed at the top in the hierarchy of

important issues the department was grappling with.

To promote unparalleled levels of agricultural development in the Mpumalanga Province, the emerging farmers were taken to five projects where they interacted with local farmers on the farming techniques they were employing.



Farmers take notes during one of the project visits in Kuppam

Asked if the programme was giving them any valuable information, Ms Nanatjie Sibanyoni, a farmer from Witbank, said skills were a vital part for farmers if they were to contribute meaningfully to the project of food security. "The noble ideas of fighting poverty in our province can never be realised as long as farmers lack important knowledge on farming," she said.

She said farming was a rapidly changing industry which needs them to be constantly informed about the developments that are taking place in the industry, reiterating that Kuppam in India was

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a shining example of what agriculture can do to improve the lives of communities in rural areas.

"What we have learned is that with the resources we have at home, we can emulate the example of Kuppam and even do better. We only need the skills and the discipline to do it. An Mpumalanga Province that is free from poverty and unemployment is well within our reach," Ms Sibanyoni said.

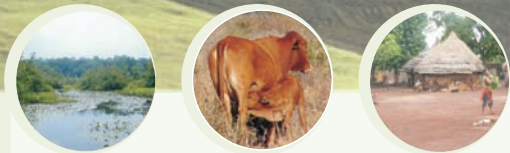
DARDLA's Human Resources Development Director, Ms Simangale Mbatha, said the chronic shortage of skills in the agricultural sector in the Mpumalanga Province called for decisiveness on the part of the department to embark on the exchange programme. Ms Mbatha said DARDLA has elevated the need to provide skills to farmers and departmental officials and that the exchange

programme would go a long way towards alleviating skills shortage.

"There are a countless number of people in our province who live below the poverty line and yet there is land that is uncultivated. And in most cases it is because of lack of skills to work the land. It would therefore be a serious indictment on us if we failed to take opportunities to skill farmers to increase food production," Ms Mbatha said.

The projects that were visited shed light on various methods used by local farmers to boost their production.





MPUMALANGA FARMERS WILL BENEFIT FROM AN EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

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The farmer exchange programme got off to an exciting start when twenty farmers from Mpumalanga Province switched their traditional roles for life skills training at the Art of Living in Bangalore, India.

The five-day long classes, which included life skills training, breathe control, and assuming of specific bodily postures, were taught to farmers before they were deployed to the Indian local farmers. The aim of the classes was to give farmers a proper grounding and to prepare them mentally as their ship to skills development set sail.

The Director of Healthy Agro Group, which facilitated the exchange programme, Mr Ramesh Nunna, said the programme was a vehicle to transfer the much-needed skills to farmers in South African and to make them understand the importance of agriculture as a primary means for economic inclusive growth.

To aid South Africa to regain its status as one of the food baskets of the world, the exchange programme with India seeks to widen the narrow skills base of emerging farmers to harness their agricultural knowledge. It is envisaged that this will serve as a lifeline to efforts to create jobs while growing the economy.

The twenty farmers are the first batch of farmers to participate in the three week programme and more participants will to be sent to India and other countries to improve the severe skills shortage in agriculture.

India is ranked as one of the leading countries whose villagers optimally use their limited available land for household food security and a place from which South Africa, a country with vast tracks of land, can learn the techniques to increase its food production.

Underscoring the importance of

unlocking the potential of farmers, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration, entered into the exchange programme not only to impart skills to farmers but to use these skills to half poverty that has viciously stalked many families in the Mpumalanga Province.

As a means to release the business acumen of the farmers, the life skills classes were effectively used to assist them to look at challenges as opportunities to create new favourable conditions for their businesses back in South Africa.

“The most outstanding thing that drew my attention is the fact that the classes rekindled the spirit of entrepreneurship in us,” he said. “We have been energised and look forward to learning new things that we can use back home. The very fact that we are here in India is evident enough that we are not pariahs as South African farmers. We are connected to other things and the farming community of the world.”

Echoing Matjila's words, Director for Human Resource Development, Ms Simangele Mbatha, could not conceal her emotions at the end of the classes, saying that the classes have made it possible for the sun that shines within the farmers to come out and inspire their confidence as they set off to work closely with the farmers to learn valuable skills in agriculture.

She said: “The life skills training have given a powerful message to farmers and officials alike. It has definitely given us a sense of purpose as we set about to leave to be with local farmers and to learn some valuable lessons from them. Indian farmers are known to use simple but effective ways of farming that is the reason why we are here.”

On the eve of their departure from The Art of Living, farmers and officials were taken through the tour of various institutions linked to The Art of Living, including an organic farm where a demonstration was given on how the organic matter derived from cow manure, water mixture with added natural ingredients and their different methods of cropping.

Other places of interest that were visited were the Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital, highlighting the ancient science of natural herbs and the reaction on the body. The last stop of the visit was the Ashram Goshala wherein an endangered breed of indigenous cattle is kept.



Delegates from South Africa that went to India to improve their farming skills

Although farming and life skills might seem worlds apart, farmers concurred that they have reaped the benefits of the classes. Praising the usefulness of the classes, Mr Johannes Matjila, who is one of the twenty farmers from Dr JS Moroka Municipality in the Nkangala District, said the classes had widened their horizons as farmers.

“We have always seen ourselves as an isolated economic entity that is not welded to anything else, let alone life skills. But this has been an experience that I believe we would not exchange for anything in the world,” said Matjila.

Mr Matjila said the life skills classes have taught them that a farmer's life was never an island but was ineluctably connected to other things.





WATER SCARCITY A MAJOR CONCERN FOR THE 14TH SEARNET CONFERENCE

Celani Ndude and Sibusiso Mgwanya

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Water scarcity is a major problem that affects many communities in the Southern and Eastern Africa region and it has got a negative impact on agricultural production as a result of climate change, according to Southern and Eastern Africa Rainwater Harvesting Network (SearNet).

The SearNet in collaboration with the Environmental Education Organization (Ecolink) has partnered with the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration (Dardla) in hosting the 14th SearNet International Conference in Mpumalanga province.

The conference was held under the theme "Scaling up rainwater harvesting innovations for climate change mitigation and adaptation." This conference took place at Bundu Lodge, from 14 to 18 November 2011.

Mr. Alex Oduor, Project Coordinator for Rainwater Harvesting in Kenya, said the overall objective of the conference was to facilitate sharing of knowledge and experiences on research, development, promotion and adoption of rainwater harvesting and management (RHM) system among diverse stakeholders working in Africa and other parts of the World.

The MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, Mr. Norman Mokoena has graced the opening of the event on behalf of the Premier Mr. DD Mabuza. On his keynote address to delegates, he said, in order to address the challenge of water scarcity and skewed allocation compounded by the impact of climate change and global warming will

require a multi-pronged response and adaption strategies.

"You will all agree that the biggest ever common challenge we are facing as a province, as a country, and Planet Earth, is the advent of climate change which is causing havoc due to this global warming. The world over, countries have now awoken to this reality, which if unattended, would have devastating consequences for present and future generations," added MEC Mokoena.

This year's annual 14th SearNet International conference took place in the province, whilst the international delegates were preparing to converge in Durban for the COP 17 climate conference to deliberate on how best to advance in a balanced fashion, the implementation of Kyoto Protocol and other agreements reached in previous climate change conferences. The main objective of the COP 17 conference was for the world countries to agree on a legally binding agreement aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while at the same time, agreeing on ways to mitigate the impact of climate change and global warming.

The annual rainfall for Mpumalanga is above South Africa's average rainfall level, making rainwater harvesting feasible opportunity for water supply development.

Ecolink in collaboration with SearNet are the leading implementers of rainwater harvesting initiatives to address the need for local water resources development and management for food security and poverty reduction. Ecolink has already started rainwater harvesting projects which consist of water tanks and dams in the following villages,

Dwaleni, Luphisi, Mjejane and Embonisweni. The delegates visited the projects and shared experiences and ideas with the beneficiaries on how to improve food security by taking advantage of the rainwater harvesting projects.

The conference was successfully attended by delegates from Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Mali, Senegal, Swaziland, Nepal, Netherlands, Ethiopia and South Africa.

Ms Basha Janthowski of Rain Foundation in Netherlands, said was impressed by the involvement of the South African Government in the conference considering that SearNet is a NGO. Basha further recommended that in the next conference members of the community should form part of the proceedings, to have a proper idea of what exactly the affected people have to deal with daily.



Some of the delegates that attended the conference



Searnet delegates viewing one of the Rainwater Harvesting Projects at Dwaleni Abattoir





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