

(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Mpumalanga Legislature is duly vested with a mandate to maintain oversight of provincial executive authority and any organ of state and all provincial executive authority including provincial organs of state are accountable to it in compliance with section 114 of the constitution. The legislature is independent and performs its functions impartially without prejudice enshrining the rule of law.

In terms of Standing Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature 2013, the **Select Committee on Women, Youth, Children, and People with Disabilities** (the committee), is established in terms of Rule 135 (h) and has powers to conduct oversight on transversal issues affecting designated groups. The Committee is composed of a multiparty representation and is empowered to develop mechanisms to conduct oversight over provincial departments and public institutions.

The select committee is vested with the power to monitor, investigate and enquire into and make recommendations concerning any organ of state or constitutional body regarding transversal and transformation matters to ensure a province free from gender discrimination and inequalities in promotion of the Bill Of Rights.

The committee in accordance with Rule 119 may summon any person to appear before it to give evidence on oath/ affirmation, or to produce documents and permit oral evidence. The committee may compel an institution or a person to comply with summon subject to the rules and orders or a provincial legislation.

The Legislature seeks to establish whether provincial government delivers services effectively and efficiently within the respective local municipality areas.

2. PURPOSE OF THE OVERSIGHT VISIT

The objectives were:

- i) To assess the effective and efficient utilization of government funding and resources
- ii) To determine the impact made by the department on the improvement of quality of life to people with disability at Matsulu.

- iii) To assess the implementation of policies by the departments that seeks to improve quality of life for the people with disability.

3. METHOD OF WORK

The Committee invited and met with the Department of Social development as per the programme of the Legislature and quarterly target of the committee to a oversight visit conducted 22 March 2016.

4. PRESENTATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND MASIBAMBISANE DISABLE GROUP

The chairperson, Mr. Joseph Shongwe together with the acting district director Ms. DDT Mathebula from the Department took the committee through the presentation on their role in the operations of the Centre. In his presentation he indicated that the Centre is a beneficiary of funding of R259 000 from the department on an annual basis.

The Department indicated the following as part of their responsibilities:

- To monitor the Centre's books on monthly basis.
- To do an educational awareness at the centre.
- To provide training for management committee members at the centre.
- To provide annual on-going funding to the centre and R259 000, 00 was funded to the Centre in the 2015/16 financial year.

The committee noted that the Centre was established in 2001 by a few people with disabilities, after they realized the need for education and skills development. When the centre was started it did not have a building to operate from, and through the funding received from the Department of Social Development they managed to purchase a building that was used as the supermarket. The building cost them R 150 000 and it is the one they still using. The center is situated in Matsulu Township and admits persons from the age of 18 and above. Currently there are 112 members composed of 56 Males, 54 Females and 2 are deceased.

According to Masibambane Disabled Centre; Matsulu Township has a number of people with disabilities, but most families are still hiding them. The centre also caters for children who dropped out of school due to their special needs. The centre afford people with disabilities an opportunity to learn and acquire some life skills to enable them receive income.

The centre has teachers who are qualified to teach learners with special needs including the blind. There are also services of specialists such as Social Workers, Physiotherapists and Psychologists.

Upon the deliberation the committee noted that the following skills are provided by the Centre:

- i) Counselling for Persons with disabilities
- ii) Services and Programmes for people with disabilities infected and affected by HIV and Aids
- iii) Daily stimulation programmes for beneficiaries (handcraft, gardening, sewing and art)
- iv) Recreational services
- v) Capacity building (life and social skills)
- vi) Provision of basic education to young learners
- vii) Rehabilitation services
- viii) Economic empowerment

The Committee noted with appreciation the skills provided for the beneficiaries and sought clarity on what the centre is doing with their crafts. Are they marketed and sold and as to whether the income generated is being accounted for.

The department of Social Development indicated that they are in the process of engaging the department of Culture Sport and Recreation to also help in the show case of the centre's products.

The Committee noted that since the centre started to operate, the Department of Social development is the main funder to sustain the centre and keep it in operation. For the financial year 2015/16 an amount of R259 000 was allocated to the centre. The centre has no other source of income; however they are doing food gardening, which raised a concern from the Committee as to whether that was sufficient to sustain the centre.

4.2 Challenges

The centre raised the following challenges:

- There is no equipment such as sewing machines and welding machines to assist the centre to produce what can generate extra income.
- The centre is struggling with water supply and as a result they are unable to maintain their garden.
- The centre sometimes receives beneficiaries who are discriminated at schools, which becomes a challenge since the centre only caters for certain ages.
- Due to lack of sufficient funds, the centre is not able to put up fencing.
- The building they are operating from is too small and can no longer cater for their needs
- They are not considered for learnerships and housing (RDP)
- There are no playgrounds and sporting facilities that can cater for differently abled people including the ones on wheelchairs.

- The Members have had challenges with the centre's DELIBERATIONS leadership, as it was previously run by the same management committee for a long time. During the visit of the Select Committee they were in the process of electing the new committee.
- There is also a challenge of overcrowding at the centre.

The committee noted the challenges presented and wanted to know whether the funding is sufficient to meet the daily functioning of the Centre and also noted that the department made a commitment to assist in engaging business people to fund the Centre especially the National Lotteries Board.

5.1 FINDINGS

After the deliberations, the Committee made the following findings:

- 1) The centre has no fencing which makes it difficult to control the movement of beneficiaries, putting their lives at risk.
- 2) There is no involvement of the Ward Councillor and the CDW, in ensuring quality improvement in the status of the Centre and to the beneficiaries.
- 3) The only financial benefit is a stipend from the Department of Social Development.
- 4) There are a lot of skills that the beneficiaries are having and need to be nurtured and exposed for purposes of generating extra income for the sustainability of the centre.
- 5) There is a lot of people living with disabilities who are not benefitting from the services of the centre because some families still refuse to expose them to centres due to stereotypes.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The fencing must be prioritised as a matter of urgency to ensure control and safety of the beneficiaries.
- 2) There should be an involvement of the local Councillor and the CDW to advocate and ensure that the Centre is given the deserved recognition and support by all the community members, local business people and government entities.
- 3) The Centre assisted by the department must develop funding strategies to ensure sustainability which can be presented to local and outside business people.
- 4) The Department needs to assist the centre in ensuring that the skills acquired by the beneficiaries are adequately exposed and intensify their engagements with the Department of Culture Sport and Recreation in exposing the crafts produced by the centre to potential clients for purposes of generating more income for the centre.

- 5) The Department to embark on more awareness and educational campaigns to help families not to deprive family members living with disabilities from benefiting in the skills programme provided by the centres like Masibambane.

5. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson extended her appreciation to Members of the Committee, officials from the department of Social Development, Masibambisane Disabled Group and the support staff of the Legislature for their participation during the deliberations.

The Committee tables this report to the House for adoption with its recommendations and progress to be provided to the committee.



HON SJ MANZINI (MPL)

**CHAIRPERSON: SELECT COMMITTEE ON WOMEN,
YOUTH, CHILDREN, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

04/05/16
DATE