

# **REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS:**

## **OVERSIGHT VISITS IN THE EMALAHLENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, NKANGALA DISTRICT, 08 – 09 JULY 2014**

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (the Legislature) has a responsibility in terms of Section 118 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, (the Constitution) to facilitate public involvement in its legislative and other processes. Sections 114 and 133 of the Constitution, read with Rule 190(4) and Rule 131 of the Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (the Rules) directs the Legislature to hold the Executive accountable for the exercising of powers and performance of their functions. Therefore, the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (the Committee) regularly conducts public hearings and oversight visits to projects of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (the department) and other projects in the Province; in the various municipalities of the Province.

In terms of Rule 190(4) and Rule 131 of the Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (the Rules) the Portfolio Committee has a constitutional mandate to oversee the performance of the Department and to hold the Executive Authority accountable for the delivery of core mandated services.

One of the instruments that enable the Portfolio Committee to execute their mandate is to undertake oversight-visits to various projects in the Province.

### **2. PURPOSE OF THE OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES**

The following objectives shaped the oversight visits to the projects of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs:

Dumako farming is a livestock farming enterprise that is located in Leeupoort, Ward 12. The beneficiary was granted a lease contract on this property by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. The lease contract was extended by five years with effect from 09 March 2012. The beneficiary was supplied with 25 heifers and 1 bull. The cattle were cleared of any disease and five (5) heifers were pregnant.

The current stock is 33 (10 calves and 23 adult cattle). The beneficiary (Mr AP Masango) passed on in August 2013 and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform was in the process of re-allocating the farm to a new beneficiary. The livestock was left in the hands of a caretaker nominated by the family.

#### 4.1.2. Project Profile

The department provided the following information in terms of the project profile:

<b>District and Municipality</b>	Nkangala District Municipality, eMalahleni Local Municipality
<b>Village name and ward</b>	Portion Leeupoort 283 JS, Ward 12
<b>Form of ownership</b>	Lease (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform)
<b>Number of hectares</b>	Ha 338. 1152 (leased 100 Ha, portion 4 Geluk 276 JS, 238.1152 PTN 29 Leeupoort 283 JS)
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	1 Male
<b>Name of beneficiary</b>	Mr AP Masango (deceased)
<b>Type of Project</b>	Livestock production
<b>Source of funding</b>	DARDLEA ( R156 000)

#### 4.1.3. Support provided by the DARDLEA

The department reported that the farmer has benefited through Masibuyele Esibayeni programme and that he has also been assisted with agricultural advice on cattle management. Furthermore, the department reported that the veterinary division also supported this project.

#### 4.1.4. The Committee observed the following main challenges of the co-operative:

- The project was left in the hands of a caretaker who was unable to take full responsibility and decisions on the management of the project;
- There was no effective management of livestock due to the long process of farm reallocation;

#### 4.1.6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends that the department must:

1. Continually engage with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and ensure that a new beneficiary is properly appointed to the farm;
2. Ensure that projects are supplied with suitable bulls and heifers to ensure that there is production.

#### 4.2. KROMDRAAI WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

##### 4.2.1. Project Background

The department drilled the borehole in 2012/13 financial year and equipped it in the 2013/14 financial year. The water quality was tested and found not to be suitable for human consumption. The project was not commissioned by the service provider but equipment was tested and no defects were identified. The beneficiaries have never used the infrastructure because the water is acidic due to some underground water contamination. The household drinking water was supplied from the neighboring farm.

##### 4.2.2. Project Profile

District and Municipality	Nkangala District Municipality; eMalahleni Local Municipality
Village name and ward	Plot 15612 Kromdraai 292 JS
Form of ownership	Owner (title deed)
Number of hectares	8.5 Ha
Beneficiaries	One male; one female; 4 youth
Name of beneficiary	Ms Tlou Skhosana
Type of Project	Vegetable and livestock
Source of funding	DARDLEA (R231 576.51)

##### 4.2.3. Support provided by DARDLEA

The department reported that they have provided the following support to the project:

- Borehole drilling and equipping;
- Provided production inputs through ME programme
- Trained farmer on vegetable and livestock production;

1. The borehole that was constructed by the department was not assisting the beneficiaries as the water was reported to be unsuitable for irrigation and household usage. A new borehole has been identified in the farm. Furthermore, the department is still to test the water and equip the new borehole;
2. The beneficiaries discontinued with the vegetable garden project.

#### **4.2.7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee therefore recommends that the department must:

1. Ensure that the new borehole is tested to see if the water is suitable for irrigation and household usage. If the water is not suitable, the department must ensure that a new borehole is constructed for the beneficiaries. In addition, the department must ensure that the source of water that is used by the neighboring farm is considered;
2. Ensure that the soil is tested and the beneficiaries are advised accordingly on what vegetables can be ploughed on the farm.

### **4.3. NOOITGEDACHT WATER SUPPLY PROJECT**

#### **4.3.1. Project Background**

The project is situated in plot 177 Nooitgedacht farm which belongs to the local municipality. The farmer is mainly farming on vegetables, livestock and crop production. The borehole was drilled in 2012/13 financial year and equipped in 2013/14 financial year. The equipment was tested and the project was not commissioned. The farmer took an initiative and utilized the equipments to irrigate his vegetable garden. The water is also used for livestock drinking.

- The farmer reported that about 20 cows died during the year and the department had not done anything, even though he had reported the incident to the department. The Committee emphasized on the importance of regular visits by the veterinary section of the department.
- The department was requested to submit a progress report on how the farmer had been assisted.
- Although the borehole was working, the Committee noted that the water was being wasted.

#### **4.3.6. FINDINGS**

After the deliberations, the Committee made the following findings:

1. About 20 cows died during the year and the department had not done anything to assist the farmer, even though the incident was reported to the department. This was due to the lack of support by the department, especially the veterinary service;
2. The borehole was functioning; however the farmer had to connect the electricity himself.

#### **4.3.7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee recommends that the department must:

1. Ensure that the farmer is compensated on the death of the 20 cows because if there was sufficient support from the department, the incident would have been avoided. In addition, the department must ensure that a report is submitted to the Committee;
2. Ensure that an electrician is appointed to assist the farmer with the electricity connection in the farm.

#### **4.4. CROSS-CUTTING FINDINGS ON ALL THE OVERSIGHT VISITS**

1. All the visited farmers raised a concern that they were not getting the needed and necessary support from the veterinary section of the department;
2. The department was not providing the beneficiaries with the necessary training.