

PRESS SUMMARY:

COGTA TO LEAD RADICAL ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AGENDA:

Cogta-KZN is going to lead from the front in the implementation of the radical transformation agenda of government, with the provision of hands-on support to municipalities to ensure that emerging and small-scale businesses are given preference and support in order to benefit the previously disadvantaged sections of society.

Supply chain processes are to be tailor-made for this goal, and so eliminate red-tapes and bottlenecks that have hindered the radical transformation agenda in the past.

This is according to the budget speech for Cogta-KZN as presented by Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs MEC Nomusa Dube in the KwaZulu-Natal legislature today (09 May 2017).

“At the recent 3rd Presidential Local Government Summit, His Excellency, President Zuma directed that the sphere of local government must lead radical socio-economic transformation and development. He unpacked Radical Economic Transformation as a policy to mean the ‘fundamental change in the structure, systems, institutions, and patterns of ownership, management and control of the economy in favour of all South Africans especially the poor, the majority of whom are African and female’,” said MEC Dube-Ncube.

“President Zuma also emphasised that ‘we need to see radical economic transformation in local government,’ she said.

“When the commanders speak, our task as their generals is to deliver and win not only the battle but the war. The philosophy that underlines this Budget Vote is that our developmental focus is on building a vibrant local economy to serve as a springboard for Radical Economic Transformation, a decent quality of life for all, with reduced poverty, and decent employment opportunities. We are determined to ensure that our radical transformation agenda does not become a mere catch phrase.”

The MEC also unveiled a set of programmes that will compliment support to be provided by Cogta to municipalities.

District Development Agencies as drivers of Radical Economic Transformation:

Our District Development Agencies have been designed as special purpose vehicles to implement strategic economic development projects and programmes for the family of

municipalities within our districts, facilitating both private and public sector investments through inclusive projects. The District Development Agencies are the vehicles that will drive the Radical Economic Transformation programme, responsible for larger-scale projects that have a wider impact beyond municipal boundaries. As such, DDAs are intended to fulfil a vital role in the regional development of KZN, serving as a powerful link between the public and the private sectors and undoing the historically uneven economic development across the province our democratic government inherited from its apartheid predecessors. I will soon be convening a meeting of all the Board Members and CEO's to ensure that all DDA's are ready for the historic mission before us.

Municipalities will be assisted by Cogta to promote previously disadvantaged farmers involved in the production, processing and distribution of food as key role players in LED initiatives through the District Development Agencies. This programme will be implemented in collaboration with the provincial Department of Education in the context of its National School Nutrition Programme for which these farmers will supply vegetables. The programme will run from July 2017 in six RASET priority districts, which include uMkhanyakude, King Cetshwayo, Ilembe, Ugu, Harry Gwala and eThekweni, and it will benefit hundreds of small farmers and thousands of schools in these districts.

Youth Enterprise Parks and job creation

In meeting the challenge of youth unemployment, the Youth Enterprise Parks Programme will be piloted this year in municipalities as a means to provide affordable space for youth to trade and access entrepreneurial support. These facilities will provide young people with easy access to Wi-Fi and training rooms. Three pilot sites have been identified at uMsunduzi in 2016/2017 and uMhlabuyalingana and KwaDukuza earmarked for 2017/2018 after further consultation with the relevant municipalities. We have set targets for all municipalities in KZN to establish Youth Directorates that will monitor the implementation of programmes, including set-asides as part of our Radical Economic Transformation agenda.

Red tape reduction

In collaboration with the Department of Small Business Development, SALGA, the International Labour Organisation and DEDTEA, we will during this financial year spearhead the Red Tape Reduction Programme which aims to address administrative, compliance and regulatory processes impacting negatively on small-, micro- and medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs), including cooperatives, thereby reducing their efficiency. The Red Tape Reduction Programme's ultimate goal is to improve service delivery and reduce the cost of doing business at local government level. Ten districts and the eThekweni Metro will be supported in dealing with red tape in different areas of their business processes, including:

- Lengthy and inefficient supply chain management processes (which ultimately affect the 30-day payment system to SMMEs);
- Municipal building plans approval processes;
- Effectiveness of the complaints notifications system;
- Communication of relevant business information by municipalities to small businesses;
- An assessment of the enforcement of municipal by-laws which are relevant to business signage; and
- Municipal business registrations and permits.

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