



“CONSOLIDATING LOCAL GOVERNMENT”

Tel : (012) 369 8000 Fax : (012) 369 8001 / P.O. Box 2094, Pretoria 8000
Menlyn Corporate Park, 175 Corobay Ave, Cnr Garsfontein Rd, Waterkloof Glen X11, Pretoria

Executive Municipal Leadership Development Programme (ELMDP) 2009/2010

23 March 2011

Delivered by: Xolile George, CEO of SALGA

Programme Director, Prof D J Fourie

Vice Chancellor, Professor De la Rey

Professor J O Kuye

SALGA Chairperson, Cllr Msondo (in his absence?)

Our partners and ardent Local Government supporters, DBSA, LGSETA, PALAMA and UP

Distinguished guests from government and the private sector

Councillors, Officials and all graduates

Family and friends

Members of the media

Ladies and gentlemen

The South African Local Government Association has been part of this ELMDP partnership since 2006 and we have been truly honoured to watch the caliber of graduates that comes out of this programme. One of our key roles as the municipal employer body is to support our members in building a well skilled work force that will allow Local Government to adequately deliver on its mandate.

This programme has, over the past five years, yielded more than 1700 graduates, including the current group. These capacitated individuals are readied to play pivotal roles towards a developmental state. They are expected to pump fresh blood into our municipalities with a new outlook. And never has a time been more apt than now.

Local Government, as we know it, is set for its first major transition in the upcoming municipal elections. These elections symbolise the second and last term of office for some councilors and we are faced with the end of an era. As we go through this transition the question begs, has our planning as a sphere been adequate? Have we been able to develop leaders?

Programme Director, before us sits the answer, it is through such endeavours Local Government will test its ability to sustain in the midst of transition and transformation.

Local Government occupies a strategic position as the face of Government to communities, the people's point of contact. The focus however, has always been on Local Government failures and little light is shed on our successes. Over the past year we have seen a plague of community protests, varying in extremities. Protests that have led to the loss of lives of our members, protests that have put squarely on Local Government's door step, matters that municipalities have no role in and are disempowered to act on. That however will not take away the progress made by municipalities in their various communities.

To date, municipalities have seen to a 92.4% access to water infrastructure, 72.2% access to sanitation and 82.6% access to electricity. Municipalities have provided indigence support in the drive to eradicate poverty. Now 8 municipalities have been accredited with Level 1 and 2 housing functions. Municipalities will always be best placed to deliver what is best for their communities, because they live in the heart of the people, the communities.

Programme Director, as we look to improve delivery in order to ensure a better life for all, we have to look at government from a holistically informed perspective. This course, pleasingly, provides learners with an insight of the South African Government functions not just Local Government, creating a basis for an understanding of Intergovernmental Relations. We have also looked at the role of politics vs administration as this understanding will create not only a better functioning municipality but a more conducive work environment.

This programme is aptly named as a leadership development programme because municipalities deliver within their communities, working directly with people. You can manage work but not people -as people are led. Graduands, you have been equipped with the skills to deliver on the mandate through proper management of work and vision driven leadership for your constituents.

A leader serves with humility not pride, a leader is not above approach nor reproach but is one always willing to learn and listen to those that follow. A leader is not defined by position but by what he/she contributes towards the greater vision. A leader listens to the cries of his/her people and capacitates them to do better and live better. A leader serves and is not served. A leader makes sacrifices and always remains just, true and honest.

I cannot fathom the dedication and sacrifice made by the families and friends of the leaders partaking in this programme. But, we thank you for the support you have diligently provided to

today's graduates. We trust that the output into their daily work will have been well worth the effort.

Local Government's partners here today, thank for partaking in our vision for better capacitated municipalities and ensuring that it sees fruition.

I would like to close with one of tata Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela's most famous quotes which says "***Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world***".

Graduates, we congratulate you on this achievement but don't keep it to yourselves for then it is a useless ornament rather than the world changing weapon it is created to be. Together, we *will* change the world, one community at a time. Go forth, touch a life and change someone's world.

Thank you