

MZANGWA PRIORITISES SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

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Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality Executive Mayor, Eddie Mzangwa has identified economic development and job creation as the district's major priority areas. High levels of unemployment, poverty as well as lack of training and skills have prompted the district to adopt these priorities as a tool for poverty eradication.

Mzangwa said key implementation areas such as small business development, education and training, tourism development, industrial development and agricultural development were identified during consultations with community members, local municipalities and other stakeholders.

"In setting out these priorities, we were quite aware of the task and challenges ahead of us but we have always been prepared to take the bull by the horns. We also believed that is a battle we cannot win alone as government as we need the support of businesses, training institutions, financial institutions as well as our communities because no single institution can solve the current economic and social problems of our district on its own," said Mzangwa.

The district recently joined forces with major players in the small business development sector, with the aim of developing and supporting cooperatives and SMMEs.

To this end, the Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality hosted the office of the premier, the Dihlabeng Local Municipality, FET colleges and the Services SETA, held a two-day inaugural summit on support and development of cooperatives and SMMEs in the district last week.

The summit which was held in Bethlehem was aimed at ensuring proper coordination and integration of activities and interventions relating to the support and development of SMMEs and cooperatives, to maximize the impact of investments.

Mzangwa said the training of SMMEs and cooperatives will go a long way in giving a major boost to work done by local economic development units in the district.

"This will also improve the work done by the local municipalities supporting cooperatives by assisting them with their establishment, registration, drawing of business plans, mentoring, identification of growth opportunities and securing of business funding. We no longer want to give people money and training and leave them, but intend to help them to sustain their businesses," said Mzangwa.

During the summit, head of the Services Sector Education and Training Authority (Seta), Doctor Sihle Moon, said the agency had selected four geographical areas in Thabo Mofutsanyana district to support skills development and partnerships to stimulate local economies.

"Through this partnership, we commit to equip SMMEs and cooperatives with relevant practical skills to meet the demands of training across a wide range of qualifications.

This will include, but not be limited to farming and agriculture enterprise development, to construction and manufacturing services, personal care and tourism and mining and mineral enterprise development, thus creating opportunities for a cohort of unemployed graduates to acquire relevant work experience," said Moon.

[Source: www.theweekly.co.za]