



Province of the

EASTERN CAPE

Department of Housing, Local Government and
Traditional Affairs

MEC's OPENING AND WELCOMING SPEECH ON THE LED CONFERENCE

**MTHATHA HEALTH RESOURCE CENTRE
08 – 09 NOVEMBER 2007**



Chairpersons of the Portfolio Committees of the EC Legislature

House of Traditional Leaders

Mayors and Portfolio Councillors

Chamber of Business

National and Provincial Development Agencies

Provincial Disabled Persons' Association

Representatives of projects and entrepreneurial organizations

Representatives of both national and provincial departments

Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning to you all

It gives me great pleasure to stand before you today and open this Inaugural Provincial Local Economic Development (LED) conference.

The meaning of LED is continuously re-conceptualized through such gatherings, which invariably shapes and re-shapes our current and future thinking on this undertaking.

Democratic South Africa, as most of you will be aware, has experienced an evolution in LED thinking that has most recently



coalesced into the 2006 National LED Framework, which amongst others refocuses our understanding of:

- the role of local government in LED,
- the need for, and place of proper strategic planning in the LED process,
- the importance of LED partnerships, and a number of other concerns and issues that will be treated at this conference.

I then deem it of utmost importance that such a gathering should contribute to deepening the understanding of the National LED Framework and its progressive implementation through consideration of the following, among other objectives: -

1. Providing an opportunity for a further deepening of conversations on actions to be embarked upon in order to expand and improve the efficacy of LED facilitation and support by Government and other agencies



2. Sharpening an understanding by stakeholders on the importance of their actions around the following key areas of the LED spectrum:
 - Social capital mobilization and effective entrepreneurial partnerships
 - Capabilities of institutions for integrated and coordinated facilitation and support of LED
 - Funds mobilization, efficient complementarities and optimal spending for sustainable LED
 - LED knowledge and policy development, information management and propagation
3. Providing an opportunity for sharing lessons on emerging innovations and interesting best-practices.

The consideration of the above should therefore duly translate to the realisation of the following:



1. Enhanced understandings of how key elements of the LED spectrum that will be the focus of conversations at this conference fit, and are supposed to work together. Often we tend to concentrate only on that which concerns our organisational specialisations and miss an understanding of how we impact or may be impacted by others in the community of LED agents.

Flowing from such deepening understanding therefore, should be an ongoing critical interrogation of our organisational and individual positions and actions, as well as a constant re-aligning of these in order to better serve the common purpose of local socio-economic development.

2. Enhanced networking and working relations among key stakeholders in the LED endeavour -- stakeholders who are either establishing new relationships, or consolidating existing ones.



If we do well on these two outcomes above, we are likely to better define our organisational missions for improved complementarity, and are likely to better focus our resources for optimal impact and minimal wastage.

On that note, on behalf of the Provincial LED Partners:

- The Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs
(My Department)
- The Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA);
- The Provincial Treasury, and
- The Office of the Premier,

Closely supported by the Thina Sinako advisory team

I wish you all a fruitful two days of conversations and interactions.

