

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**28 March 2017**

**NGWAABE INTEGRATED ENERGY CENTRE (IeC) SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP**

The Department of Energy (DoE) returned to Ngwaabe IeC on 16-17 March 2017 to conduct a two-day IeC 'Sustainability Workshop' with local stakeholders including the municipality, co-operative members and employees, provincial development agencies, national bodies, as well as the sponsors. Officially launched by the Minister of Energy, Ms Tina Joemat-Pettersson, in November 2016, the IeC is located in Greater Tubatse Municipality, Limpopo.

The IeC is a one-stop energy centre aimed at enhancing accessibility and affordability of energy to rural areas, job creation, poverty alleviation and stimulate rural economies. The Centres are an initiative of the Department of Energy (DoE) in response to the White Paper on Energy Policy, which advocates for increased affordable access to energy services to disadvantaged communities, the stimulation of economic development by creating an investor friendly climate, and securing energy supply by encouraging diversity of energy supplies and energy carriers.

Noting the potential challenges that face the IeC's as they establish themselves within communities, the DoE has realised the need to conduct workshops at operational IeC's in order to enhance the sustainability of such enterprises.

These workshops aim to address the primary objectives of the IeC programme, strengthen the relationship with the stakeholders, position the IeC as a viable community energy enterprise, diagnose challenges, improve and instil good governance of the project, financial management, identify risks and come up with risk mitigation and management strategy.

Thus, the workshops are designed to empower the co-operatives while ensuring that the IeC's objectives are achieved. Through this type of capacity building support, the DoE envisages that growth self-sustaining IeC's that are able to transfer socio-economic benefits to the host communities - particularly the unemployed, women, youth and people with disabilities.

A concept implemented since 2002, all IeC projects are designed to be integrated, co-ordinated and monitored for impact, to ensure sustainability and improved rural enterprise development.

Addressing workshop participants, the chairperson of the Co-operative Mr Moshidi shared members' excitement that the DoE had been able to organise this session so soon after the official opening 4 months ago. He said the workshop will help them to improve their internal

controls and governance systems. Moshidi further encouraged the members and his Board colleagues to work together for the success of their leC in the interests of the greater community.

The implementation of the agreed plans during the workshops must result in an efficient, effective, and sustainable leC that has a measurable impact on energy access, poverty alleviation and rural enterprise development.

It is envisaged that the implementation of these planned capacity building workshops will result in the growth of leC's that embrace innovation, and will be open to the introduction of new income streams such as alternative energy. Capacity building also aims to improve business ethics that contribute towards social cohesion, improved co-ordination and collaboration between stakeholders, as well sustainable jobs, an improved rural economy, competitiveness and leC expansion going forward.

Similar sustainability workshops are due to take place in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Free State and Northern Cape where the department has similar projects. The dates of these workshops will be communicated.

#### ***Issued by the Department of Energy - Spokesperson***

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NB.

Below is the list of the Ngwaabe leC Sustainability Workshop participants:

- Ngwaabe Energy Cooperative
- Fetakgomo Greater Tubatse Local Municipality
- Limpopo Business Support Agency
- Small Enterprise Development Agency
- Department of Energy (Petroleum Compliance & PMO)
- Department of Labour
- SARS
- Shell
- Two Rivers Platinum