

**Keynote address by the Minister of Energy,**

**Mr Jeff Radebe, MP**

**Wednesday, 17 March, 13h55**

**Chaba Wind Farm, Eastern Cape**

- Programme Director,
- Honourable Premier of the Eastern Cape
- Mayor of Great Kei Municipality,
- Councillors of both Local and District Municipalities,
- Chairperson, CEOs and Board Members of Chaba Wind Farm
- CEOs and representatives of EDF Renewables, Hlumani High School, Thobela Sports Consulting and Endalweni Trading
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen
- Members of the Media

Good morning,

I am greatly honoured to address you at this special engagement here at Hlumani High School, one of the beneficiaries of EDF Renewables' socio-economic development and enterprise development programme.

On the way here to the High School, I couldn't stop thinking how important education is to uplifting the lives of the less-fortunate and for the development of our society. It is, at least in my thinking, the only way we can defeat poverty over the long-term.

According to Statistics South Africa, there is an undeniable relationship between poverty and education. Studies have shown that the higher a

person's qualification, the more likely they are to be employed and absorbed in the formal labour force, and therefore, are less susceptible to falling into poverty. In 2015, 79.2% of South African adults with no education lived in poverty. In comparison, 35.6% of adults with only a matric qualification live in poverty. The figure was just 8.4% for adults with a higher education.

There are some though, who think having tertiary education is not that important, because you may have your qualifications and still be unemployed – I disagree with them. Education gives you the skills to compete in the labour market – which is what most uneducated people do not have. People with qualifications have much better chances of finding employment than those without. But it's not only about finding employment, it's about being able to read, write and reason. These very basic skills will help enhance your innovation skills and equip you with the necessary tools that could be of assistance should you wish to be an entrepreneur.

This is where our IPPs have started to make an impact in our communities, while generating clean energy. These IPPs confirm our view that we do not have to separate climate change responses from our goals of pursuing development and poverty eradication. Pursuing the green economy must be and is linked to our overall agenda of pursuing employment-creating growth and socio-economic improvements in the lives of our people.

During the Chaba Wind Farm's project lifespan of 20 years, it will inject almost R26 million into local upliftment projects that will directly benefit members of historically disadvantaged communities in the region. Already

the IPP have demonstrated their commitment to the community's socio-economic upliftment by spending more than R4 million by the end of December 2018.

When driving here today and enjoying the sight of rich and fertile land in this part of the country, once-again, I have fully appreciated the Eastern Cape Provincial Government's emphasis on agriculture as an economic growth sector for the Province. It is then no surprise that throughout the Province, IPP projects are supporting community agricultural initiatives.

Also here in the Komga Municipality, communities have identified agriculture as a means to reduce poverty and increase income levels, while also improving food security in the community and the Province. I was pleased to learn that Chaba Wind Farm is supporting **Endalweni Trading**, a women-owned business, planting tomatoes, beans and intending on entering the market of fish farming. This project is not only providing jobs, and increasing food security, but is also providing the local community with skills and promoting economic livelihoods. I also learnt about the **Makhazi Women's Cooperative**, where the Wind Farm is supporting a successful livestock farming initiative by previously unemployed women, now earning a sustainable income.

The Chaba Wind Farm is supporting not only entrepreneurial activities and farming, but also education in the community. The Hlumani High School, the only public secondary school in the rural Komga area, has benefited from this support not only to improve the quality of teaching and learning, but also to develop the sports grounds and the school's extramural sports program. The no-fee school, with its 24 educators, are committed to creating a stimulating academic environment for the realisation of the 557

learners' full potential. The support provided helps the school to develop learners that are responsible, self-reliant and independent thinkers that will contribute to the development not only of this community but also of the Province and country at large.

I have been told that a total of 160 school learners are participating in the sport programme funded by Chaba Wind Farm. An entrepreneurial activity, Thobela Sports Consulting, has grown out of this programme, thus allowing for income-generation. Thoba Sports Consulting is providing expertise in the field of sports management to assist organisations with the creation and implementation of sports programmes for the benefit of communities based in Port Elizabeth, surrounding areas and the Eastern Cape in general. They are providing skills transfer opportunities for young, qualified and enthusiastic sport administrators and sports enthusiasts. So far, 8 school teachers of the Hlumani High School have been upskilled through participation in the programme. This is a truly innovative approach that I hope can be replicated in other such programmes.

I would like to thank all the different parties and partners in these projects, for their contribution in ensuring that more and more of our children can have an opportunity to get decent education and more of our people can have income-generating opportunities and jobs. You deserve a round of applause.

I thank you.