



LIMPOPO
LEGISLATURE

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

LIMPOPO PROVINCE

**VERBATIM REPORT
[HANSARD]**

**OF THE
DELIBERATIONS AND DEBATES
OF THE
SECOND SESSION
OF THE
SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF THE LIMPOPO LEGISLATURE**

TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2020

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL [CABINET]

Office of the Premier	Mr C S Mathabatha [Premier]
Education	Ms S P Boshielo
Health	Dr P C Ramathuba
Social Development	Ms N C Rakgoale
Economic Development, Environment and Tourism	Mr T A Mokone
Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure	Mr N D Masemola
Transport and Community Safety	Ms M M Lerule-Ramakhanya
Agriculture and Rural Development	Ms N A Ndalane
CoGHSTA	Mr B R Makamu
Sport, Arts and Culture	Ms T A Moraka
Provincial Treasury	Mr S C Sekoati

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The Deputy Speaker	Mr A J D Ndou
The Chief Whip	Mr M E Mokgonyana
The Deputy Chief Whip	Dr S M Mochadi
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The Leader of Government Business	Mr S C Sekoati
The Leader of the Opposition	Mr M J Buthane
The Secretary of Limpopo Legislature	Mr S Mothoa

MEMBERS OF THE LIMPOPO LEGISLATURE (in alphabetical order)

PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE HOUSE:

African National Congress (ANC)

Democratic Alliance (DA)

Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)

Vryheidsfront Plus (FF+)

1. Aphiri, Mokgadi Johanna	ANC
2. Boshielo, Shela Polly	ANC
3. Buthane, Modikane Joseph	EFF
4. Kekana, Nakedi Grace	ANC
5. Lebea, Kedibone Margaret	ANC
6. Lekganyane, Nakedi Maria	ANC
7. Lerule-Ramakhanya, Mavhungu Maureen	ANC
8. Maharaj, Risham	DA
9. Mahasela, Mahlodi Caroline	ANC
10. Makamu, Basikopo Rodgers	ANC
11. Makhurupetje, Makoma Grace	ANC
12. Managa, Lilian	EFF
13. Manganye, Tinyiko Florence	EFF
14. Maritz, Marcelle Frieda	FF+
15. Marule, Jacob Boy Otto	ANC
16. Maseko, Funani Jerry	ANC
17. Masekoameng, Mmabogahla Isaiah	ANC
18. Masemola, Namane Dickson	ANC
19. Mashamaite, Nkholo Victor	ANC
20. Mathabatha, Chupu Stanley	ANC
21. Mathe, Simon Matsobane	ANC
22. Mathye, Susani Violet	ANC
23. Matlou, Leswafo Joshua	ANC
24. Mdaka, Falaza Philemon	ANC
25. Mitileni, Wisani Goodman	ANC
26. Mochadi, Sekutu Monicca	ANC
27. Mohlala, Manamane Charles	EFF
28. Mokaba-Phukwana, Mapula Annah	ANC
29. Mokgonyana, Essob Mmanoko	ANC
30. Mokone, Thabo Andrew	ANC
31. Molapo, Reneiloe Rosemarry	ANC
32. Monama, Ganny Rodgers	ANC
33. Monyamane, Nkome Sarah	ANC
34. Moraka, Anna Tandi	ANC
35. Mphahlele Selaelo Regina	EFF
36. Ndalane, Nandi Annah	ANC
37. Ndou, Azwindini Jeremiah Dingaan	ANC
38. Phala, Katlego Suzan	DA
39. Phala, Kgolane Alfred	ANC
40. Radzilani, Fulufhelo Florence	ANC
41. Rakgoale, Chritian Nkakareng	ANC

42. Ramathuba, Phophi Constance	ANC
43. Raphela, George	EFF
44. Sekoati, Seaparo Charles	ANC
45. Selamolela Selelo Donald	ANC
46. Selane, Che Bonnie David	ANC
47. Seono, Mmaishibe Rebecca	ANC
48. Seshoka, Jetrick	EFF
49. Smalle, Jacobus Frederik	DA

PERMANENT DELEGATES TO NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

1. Mamaregane, Mmamora Lilliet	ANC
2. Mathevula, Brenda Tirhani	EFF
3. Matibe, Tshitereke Baldwin	ANC
4. Nchabeleng, Mamagase Aleck	ANC
5. Shaikh, Shahidabibi	ANC
6. Smit, Christiaan Frederik Beyers	DA

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- a) Rules Committee
- b) Internal Arrangements Committee
- c) Programming Committee
- d) Whippery
- e) Disciplinary Committee
- f) Committee on Ethics and Members' Interests
- g) Committee of Presiding Officers
- h) Public Accounts Committee
- i) Public Participation and Petitions
- j) Quality of Life and Status of Women, Youth and Disability

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- b) Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs
- c) Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure
- d) Economic Development, Environment and Tourism
- e) Agriculture and Rural Development
- f) Transport and Community Safety
- g) Sport, Arts and Culture
- h) Education
- i) Health
- j) Social Development
- k) Public Administration
- l) Oversight Review Mechanism

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Ndala, N T (Ms)
Netshamulivho, A J (Mr)

**VERBATIM SPEECHES OF THE
LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE
LEBOWAKGOMO LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER
TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2020
MEETING OF THE HOUSE: 10:00**

1. PRAYERS/MEDITATIONS

THE SPEAKER

We shall now have the opportunity for a moment of silence for prayers and/or meditation.

[SILENCE]

Thank you very much. You may be seated. Good morning, honourable Members, and welcome to our Sitting. Honourable Members should note and consider that the fight against the spread of COVID-19 still continues. We should always comply with COVID-19 regulations by wearing our masks, washing our hands regularly with soap or sanitiser and keeping social distancing.

2. MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Are there any Motions without Notice in terms of House Rule 145? Hon Phala, you are recognised.

MS PHALA

Thank you, Hon Speaker.

CONDEMNATION OF THE RUTHLESS MURDER OF COL JEFFREY SEROKA
(Motion without Notice)

I rise on behalf of the Democratic Alliance that this House notes the death of Col Jeffrey Seroka who was fatally gunned down outside his home in Maganagobuswa village in the early morning hours over the weekend.

Col Seroka was on his way to a funeral around 04:30 am when he was ruthlessly murdered. His vehicle was later found abandoned. The motive for his murder is still not yet known. This House should note that SAPS has confirmed that there is a manhunt underway and that all possible leads are being investigated.

The House should further note that the DA is concerned about the recent spike in murders in Limpopo which has also now claimed the life of one of our men in blue. We would like to express our deepest condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Col Seroka, and we are calling for an urgent action to be taken to arrest the perpetrators. I so move.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Phala. Is there any seconder? Hon Smalle, you are recognised.

MR SMALLE

Before I second the motion, is the roving mic not available today? I just want to confirm that. I stand to second the motion as read by Hon Phala. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Hon Smalle, you must use that one because Hansard Section has raised a concern about the roving mic. Use the table mic that you were using. Yes, second the motion, Hon Smalle.

MR SMALLE

Hon Speaker, I did second the proposal.

THE SPEAKER

Alright.

MR SMALLE

In the previous Sitting, there was a roving mic that was going around. I'm just asking if it's longer available. That's what I'm just asking.

THE SPEAKER

No, we are no longer using the roving mic, Hon Smalle. Hon Radzilani, you are recognised.

MS RADZILANI

Thank you, Hon Speaker. Hon Premier in absentia; Members of the Executive Council; Hon Speaker and Deputy Speaker of this august House; Chief Whip of the ruling party, Hon Mokgonyana, and honourable Members of this august House, good morning.

COMMEMORATION OF BLACK WEDNESDAY – THE DAY ON WHICH THE APARTHEID GOVERNMENT BANNED *THE WORLD* AND *WEEKEND WORLD* NEWSPAPERS
(Motion without Notice)

Allow me on behalf of the African National Congress to present this motion that yesterday, 19 October 2020, marks the second significant occasion which is an indication that the struggle for the liberation of this country was a long-protracted process with most people paying the ultimate price.

On 19 October 1977, the apartheid regime closed *The World* and *Weekend World* newspapers in a bid to silence its horrendous acts of killing black activists. This date came to be known as Black Wednesday which saw people like Percy Qoboza, a doyen of journalism, being taken into detention and held for five months under section 10 of

the Internal Security Act. This was followed by the announcement declaring 19 black consciousness organisations as illegal and scores of activists detained.

Today, we commemorate the fateful day in South Africa as Black Wednesday, and it is also marked as National Press Freedom Day. On the same date, some years later in 1986, the apartheid regime reportedly brought to an end the colourful life of President Samora Machel and other 33 passengers aboard his flight. President Samora Machel was a fierce opponent of the nationalist government, and it came as no surprise that the South African government could have been responsible for his untimely death for its role.

The apartheid government was very complicit in conducting investigations into the death of a head of state who perished on their soil, leading to mounting speculations that Pretoria could have had a hand in his death. It is now 34 years since the death of President Samora Machel, but his fortitude against the apartheid regime still counts as one of the hallmarks of the struggle for the people of South Africa. I so move, Hon Speaker.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Radzilani. Is there any seconder? Mr Mdaka, you are recognised.

MR MDAKA

I second the motion as moved by Hon Radzilani. Thank you, Hon Speaker.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you. Is there any other motion without notice? Hon Lebea-Olaiya, you are recognised.

MS LEBEA

DROWNING OF TWO LEARNERS FROM REV M P MALATJIE PRIMARY SCHOOL (Motion without Notice)

Hon Speaker, I, Kedibone Lebea, rise on behalf of the African National Congress that this august House notes a drowning incident involving two learners from Rev M P Malatjie Primary School. The learners who are from the same family were found on Wednesday, 14 October 2020 around 15:00. The incident took place in Seshego township outside Polokwane while the two learners aged 12 and 9 were not at school, but in the care of their parents.

We would like to applaud the Department of Social Development for a swift response in attending to the family during this catastrophe. Their funeral will be held tomorrow on Wednesday, 21 October 2020 at Zone A in Seshego. We are saddened by this development, and we want to encourage the community that there can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it protects its children. May their gentle souls rest in eternal peace! I so move.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Olaiya. Is there any seconder? Hon Makhurupetje, you are recognised.

MS MAKHURUPETJE

Thanks very much, Hon Speaker. I stand to support the motion. Thanks.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much Hon Makhurupetje. Is there any other motion without notice? There is none.

3. NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Are there any Notices of Motions in terms of Rule 146? There is none.

4. MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Are there any Members' Statements according to Rule 200? Hon Maharaj, you are recognised.

MR MAHARAJ

Thank you, Hon Speaker.

CHALLENGING PREMIER MATHABATHA AND HIS EXECUTIVE TO UNDERGO LIFESTYLE AUDITS (Members' Statement)

In August 2020, the Western Cape Premier, Alan Winde, released a lifestyle audit report conducted on himself and his entire Executive. The report confirmed that Western Cape Cabinet Members and their spouses led lifestyles commensurate with their income during the period under review. Last week, the North West Premier, Job Mokgoro, undertook to institute lifestyle audits on all Members of his Executive Council.

In response to a follow-up question on its anti-corruption strategy during a question and answer session in the North West Provincial Legislature last week, Premier Mokgoro indicated that he had already commissioned the Provincial Treasury to set the process in motion. A lifestyle audit of an executive office bearer should determine whether their lifestyle and their family's lifestyle is in line with their known income streams.

The audits must include credit searches on the applicants and their immediate family members; criminal record searches; verification of fixed and movable assets; conducting an asset search in the case of undeclared assets; and assessing donations, gifts and potential links to executive responsibilities. The Limpopo province will take years to recover from the VBS looting that implicated high-ranking government officials and politicians.

Allegations of large-scale corruption during the time of COVID-19 surface every day. Can Premier Mathabatha confirm if he will instruct Treasury to conduct lifestyle audits on his good self and on his Executive? And if not, how will the Premier give assurance to the residents of Limpopo that the Executive and their families are corruption free and living within their means? Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Maharaj. Is there any other Members' Statement? Hon Seshoka, you are recognised.

MR SESOKA

Thank you, Hon Speaker, and greetings to you and the honourable Members who are present in this House today.

EFF'S CONDEMNATION OF GREAT NORTH TRANSPORT'S (GNT) VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS

(Members' Statement)

The EFF is dismayed by the treatment of workers by the notorious LEDET entity called GNT which continues to violate and infringe on the rights of workers. There is currently a confusion among workers, especially the bus drivers as to whether their pension payouts are still with Alexander Forbes or Sanlam. Their pensions have been migrated from Alexander Forbes to Sanlam by employers, but workers were never clarified on this matter.

There was no clear explanation and buy-in by the workers in terms of this move. Furthermore, when workers retire, it takes more than a year for them to receive their pensions. Some retired workers even die without having received their pension money. They are dying probably because of heart attack brought by the cruelty of the government. The same applies when a worker dies; it takes more than a year for the dependants to receive money they deserve.

We condemn in the strongest terms the intention by GNT to starve and completely interrupt family stability and wellbeing. It is clear that government does not value the role of families in society. As basic and essential building blocks of societies, families have a crucial role in social development. They bear the primary responsibility for the education and socialisation of children as well as instil the values of citizenship and belonging in society. The state of GNT buses also puts the lives of drivers and passengers in great danger because of their dilapidated condition.

If it is not a bus roof ripping off, mismanagement of funds, it is the abuse and exploitation of workers. We call upon the MEC for LEDET to investigate this matter and provide a lasting solution for the benefit of the workers. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Seshoka. Is there any other Members' Statement? Can you speak into the mic?

MR SMALLE

Hon Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. In the previous Sitting, certain Members' Statements were referred to Members of the Executive that were not present. Those Members' Statements were then passed on from one Member of the Executive to another to report back to this House. I would ask that you ask those ...

THE SPEAKER

Can you speak louder, honourable Member? I can't capture some of the things that you are raising.

MR SMALLE

... Members of the Executive to respond to those statements. I beg your pardon?

THE SPEAKER

You are out of order, Hon Smalle.

MR SMALLE

Then I will ask you in the next Sitting.

THE SPEAKER

Yes. Can you sit down? If you are done with the Members' Statements, can I check with the Executive if there is any response to the statements? Hon Sekoati, you are recognised.

THE MEC FOR PROVINCIAL TREASURY

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to clarify the issue of the Members' Statements. Normally, if Hon Smalle makes a statement and the MEC responsible for that is not in, we would ask Members of the Executive Council respond to those questions or areas that need to be followed up. What we can do is to agree in principle that if a question has been asked in the House and the Member is not in within that period, then we define a period as to when that Member should come up with a response. But as we speak, we haven't heard such. So, statements that have been raised by Members who are speaking on behalf of those Members who might be absent on that day have been responded to. Let us take guidance from that.

THE SPEAKER

I'm agreeing with you, Hon Sekoati. Hon Smalle raised that also, knowing very well what is happening. He knows very well. We have been doing this at all times.

MR SMALLE

Hon Speaker, on a point of order!

THE SPEAKER

No, Hon Smalle.

MR SMALLE

No, I'm not going to sit down. I'm going to raise a point of order when I need clarity.

THE SPEAKER

Hon Sekoati has clarified that.

MR SMALLE

He has not.

THE SPEAKER

In case a Member of the Executive Council is not present, those who are present will assist or we shall refer it to another MEC.

MR SMALLE

Hon Speaker, if the matter has not been answered by the MEC on the day it has been referred to the Executive for a response, at the next House Sitting when that specific MEC is present, surely it should be answered then. This is what I'm trying to put forward to you. I understand the principle, but the MEC is present and the issue was referred to him, and it was on the matter that was raised by the Members' Statement that was read at the previous Sitting by Hon Maharaj on the Lepelle-Nkumpi matter to the honourable MEC for Cooperative Governance.

THE SPEAKER

Hon Smalle, it should be clear that you are referring to the previous Members' Statement, not for today. With regard to the time for responding, the Speaker is the one who should determine the time in terms of the rules.

MR SMALLE

Can I then just ask that at the next available Sitting you come up with the ruling as to when that time will be? We don't know when you want to determine that because you are not coming back to us. So, let them respond either in writing or in the House. Surely, we can't pose Members' Statements to the Executive and none of the Members would like to respond to them.

THE SPEAKER

No, like I said, they are going to respond. The Speaker will determine as to when the Executive will respond to that Members' Statement. [INTERJECTION] That is what I'm

saying; they will respond, Hon Smalle. Just be patient. I will communicate that to the Executive.

MR SMALLE

I will ask you again in the next Sitting. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Yes, I will do that. Can we proceed with our programme? Order! Honourable Members. Can we proceed, honourable Members because I have made a ruling on that matter? Are you on the very same matter, Hon Boshielo? Let's hear from her.

THE MEC FOR EDUCATION

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The last time I checked in this House, there was one Speaker who is running the order of the proceedings. The issue was raised as a Members' Statement. I think we are now on motions without notice. So, when we come to Members' Statements, it will be answered. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Let's proceed, honourable Members.

5. EXECUTIVE STATEMENTS

Can I check with the Executive? Is there any Executive Statement? Dr Ramathuba, you are recognised.

THE MEC FOR HEALTH

Thank you, Hon Speaker, Hon Deputy Speaker, Hon Premier in absentia, Hon Chief Whip of the Majority Party, honourable Members, colleagues in the Executive Council.

A MESSAGE OF SPEEDY RECOVERY TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH, DR ZWELI MKHIZE AND HIS WIFE, DR MAY MKHIZE, WHO TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

(Executive Statement)

Hon Speaker, on behalf of the ANC-led government, we wish to extend a message of speedy recovery to the Minister for Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize and his wife, Dr May Mkhize, after they both tested positive for Sars-CoV-2, a virus responsible for the disease COVID-19.

The Minister has indicated in his statement that he has gone into self-isolation and he is recovering very well. In his statement, he further indicated and emphasised that COVID-19 is still with us and we should continue to adhere to health protocols as stipulated by the World Health Organisation. He also reminded us not to neglect wearing of our masks, social distancing and hand washing with water and soap and alternative use of 70% alcohol-based sanitiser.

Our work in fighting this pandemic is commendable as a country through his leadership. We have done well as a nation up to so far, and we cannot afford to drop the ball. We should be able to double our efforts in order to avoid a second wave which will be more devastating and very difficult to deal with as compared to the first wave. As a country, we will not be able to have or afford the resources to deal with the second wave. As a country, we must indicate that to date our cumulative number of cases stands at 705 254.

We have also recorded 635 257 recoveries, which is a positive move. Unfortunately, in the process, we have lost 8 492 citizens of this country due to COVID-19. Coming back home, as a province, we have registered accumulative number of 16 849 cases, of which it is encouraging because the recoveries are 15 759, but unfortunately 435 deaths. We currently have on a positive side only 413 active cases and in the last 24 hours, we have registered 72 new cases and zero death. The 72 new cases are of concern to us because if honourable Members will remember, in the past weeks we have been registering around 33, 32 and sometimes 20 new cases within 24 hours. So, if this 72 is not an indication that indeed we are really starting to drop the ball, it should be a concern for us. We are, however, concerned by the failure to adapt to the new normal by members of our communities. Societal behavioural change is still a challenge. Being at level 1 doesn't mean that the virus is gone or we have discovered a vaccine or there is treatment for COVID-19.

We want to remind those who have been infected before because there is a belief that they have developed immunity. Literature says that your immunity can be there for at least three months. So, if you have been infected more than three months ago, you can still be infected today. That is the nature of this virus. So, let's not relax and be excited because I have heard many people saying, "I have been infected, so I have developed the immunity of this virus."

Relaxation of levels is done for economic activities because we have seen devastating effects of COVID-19 on the economy and our livelihoods. It is, therefore, critical for us to be more vigilant because the risk of getting infected now is much higher than when we were under level 5 lockdown. We will continue to advise the nation that there is no need for contact meetings as long as there is a possibility of meeting virtually. Meetings are usually held in a closed setting where there is poor air circulation, and the risk of virus transmissions are very high compared to when people are meeting in an open space.

There is a strong evidence presented to WHO that Sars-CoV-2 is an airborne disease and not only transmittable through air droplets as it was initially submitted. It is important to know that you can breathe this virus when you are standing in a distance of less than 1m to 1,5m apart. The virus spreads rapidly through movement of people, so we should avoid unnecessary travelling to limit spreading the virus or getting infected. It is in our hands, as the President has indicated.

We would also like to use this opportunity to thank all our frontline workers who have been at the coalface fighting this pandemic. Some of them picked up the virus in the process, but continued to soldier on. These are our last line of defence. They are our unsung heroes and heroines. When we get infected despite wearing our masks, despite hand washing, despite sanitising, despite boosting our immune system,

whether you use lemon, you use ginger, you use garlic or you use umhlonyane or you use Vitamin C, you can still be infected and get sick because of the nature of this virus.

We have no one but the healthcare professionals to fight this battle on our behalf. It is time for each and every one of us to take this opportunity to appreciate them. We want to appreciate this House because in the previous Sitting, Members of this House continued to sing accolades to this last line of defence. The 17 October was a National Emergency Medical Services Day. These are our frontline workers who form a critical component in the entire healthcare system. Without their proper functionality, no matter how beautiful our hospitals can be; no matter how much a state-of-the-art equipment you can procure; we can have the best trauma surgeons in the world, but the fact remains, the first person who is needed to respond during an emergency is an EMS personnel whose intervention at the scene will determine whether you will live or succumb to the injuries.

It is against this background that the Limpopo Department of Health used yesterday, 19 October 2020 to honour all our EMS personnel. We also remembered those who perished while in the line of duty; those who were hijacked; those were raped and those who were killed while in the process of saving lives. These are cadres who escort us when we are sick, in some instances, with highly infectious diseases, including COVID-19 to the hospital.

At times they risk getting infected, but they never stop doing their work diligently and with utmost care. Yesterday the Department of Health erected a stone of remembrance engraved with the names of all those who perished while executing their duties. This was done so that on an annual basis, colleagues and family members will continue to lay wreaths as part of remembering the good work.

Let me conclude by again reminding all of us to play our part in protecting ourselves, our loved ones from this deadly virus. We will continue to remind everyone on a daily basis that indeed, it is in our hands. By working together, we can beat this pandemic. We have done well so far. Once more, let us remain vigilant and not drop the ball. Thank you. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, honourable MEC. Is there any other Executive Statement?

MR SESOKA

Relax! Relax! It's a point of procedure, Hon Speaker. I thought that immediately after we have presented Members' Statements, you would then call the MECs present to come and respond to those statements.

THE SPEAKER

No, they did that.

MR SESOKA

That's never happened.

THE SPEAKER

Hon Seshoka, can you sit down? They did that. We have moved to Item 5 now.

MR SESHOKA

No, they did not.

THE SPEAKER

No, they did.

MR SESHOKA

They did not respond to that.

THE SPEAKER

No, Hon Sekoati did that. Hon Seshoka, can you sit down, please?

MR SESHOKA

No, Hon Sekoati was only giving a directive in terms of what is expected of them.

THE SPEAKER

Hon Seshoka, can you sit down, please? We have moved to Item 5.

MR SESHOKA

I agree, you have moved, but you know you have moved in the wrong direction.
[APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

No, it's up to you. Can I check with the political parties if they want to respond? I recognise Hon Maharaj.

MR MAHARAJ

Hon Speaker, the Democratic Alliance wishes to send our condolences to all families that have lost their loved ones through COVID-19 as well our healthcare workers and our frontliners. We also make a clarion call to the communities and the people of Limpopo province to heed the call to ensure that there is precaution taken as COVID-19 has not disappeared; it is still with us and will be with us for some time. We must also ensure that we do not drop the ball as we proceed with life and as we continue on a daily basis.

At the same time, we would also like to express our gratitude and appreciation to all our healthcare workers and frontliners that are doing a sterling job in trying to assist

the communities and in trying to fight COVID-19 jointly with the communities and to be there when people need them the most. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Maharaj. Hon Matlou, you are recognised.

MR MATLOU

Thank you very much, Hon Speaker, Hon Premier in absentia and honourable Members of the Executive present here. From the African National Congress, we want to acknowledge in particular the message we sent to the family of Dr Mkhize and his wife, and we also want to appreciate the good work that our frontliners have been doing by being consistent in fighting the pandemic. We also want to thank the department for acknowledging the good work done by the emergency personnel. We really believe that Hon Mkhize will recover very soon and make sure that he continues leading the fight against COVID-19 in the entire country. I thank you. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Matlou. Do you want to respond, Hon Seshoka?

MR SESOKA

No.

THE SPEAKER

6. TABLING OF COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER REPORTS AND PAPERS

Are there any tablings of committee reports, other reports and papers? There is none.

7. ORDERS OF THE DAY

Item 7: Consideration and Adoption of the 2018/19 Reports of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development. It's over to you, committee chair.

MR MASEKOAMENG

Hon Speaker, Hon Deputy Speaker and Chief Whip, on behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Rural Development, I, Masekoameng Mmabogahla Isaiah, hereby move that the report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on 2018/19 Second Quarter Financial and Performance Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as it appears on the ATC be adopted as a report of this honourable House. I move accordingly.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Masekoameng. Is there any seconder? Hon Mokaba-Phukwana, you are recognised.

MS MOKABA-PHUKWANA

Thank you, Hon Speaker. I rise to support the report presented by Hon Mmabogahla Masekoameng. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. It's over to you, committee chair.

MR MASEKOAMENG

On behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, I Masekoameng Mmabogahla Isaiah, hereby move that the report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on the 2018/19 Third Quarter Financial and Performance Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as it appears on the ATC be adopted as a report of this honourable House. I move accordingly.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you. Is there any seconder? Hon Mathye, you are recognised.

MS MATHYE

[Inaudible]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you. It's over to you, committee chair.

MR MASEKOAMENG

Again, on behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, I Masekoameng Mmabogahla Isaiah, hereby move that the report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on the 2018/19 Fourth Quarter Financial and Performance Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as it appears on the ATC be adopted as a report of this honourable House. I move accordingly.

THE SPEAKER

Is there any seconder? Hon Aphiri, you are recognised.

MS APHIRI

Thanks very much, Madam Speaker. Ke ema mo ke le Mokgadi Aphiri. Ke thekga pego ye e beilwego mo Ntlokgolo ka modulasetulo wa komiti ya temo. Ke a leboga.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you. It's over to you, committee chair.

MR MASEKOAMENG

On behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, I Mmabogahla Isaiah Masekoameng, hereby move that the report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on the 2018/19 Annual Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as it appears on the ATC be adopted as a report of this honourable House. I move accordingly.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Masekoameng. Is there any seconder? Hon Monyamane, you are recognised.

MS MONYAMANE

Thank you, Hon Speaker. I, Sarah Monyamane, rise to second the motion by Hon Masekoameng. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Monyamane. We shall now refer to the Speakers' List. The first speaker is Hon Kedibone Lebea. You are allocated three minutes.

MS LEBEA

Thank you, Hon Speaker. Deputy Speaker, Hon Premier in absentia, honourable Members of this august House, distinguished guests, members of our Chapter 9 and 10 institutions, blessed morning. The restoration of the dignity of the people of Limpopo remains our priority. Their health, wellbeing as well as the preservation of their land and farming is high on our agenda. As we continue to celebrate 24 years of freedom and the achievements of the last two decades, we are mindful of the needs to further improve the lives of our people through quality and sustainable programmes and services.

As the portfolio committee responsible for Agriculture and Rural Development in the sixth administration of the Limpopo Legislature, we remain committed to creating sustainable programmes through which our people can draw maximum value from agricultural resources of this country. Our programmes are engineered towards promoting development and increasing the footprint of the agricultural sector towards economic growth and job creation.

The committee applauds the department for its ability to conduct continuous surveillance throughout the province which played a significant role in controlling an outbreak of food-and-mouth disease (FMD) detected on 23 May 2018 at Matiyani village which is adjacent to the Punda Maria Gate of the Kruger National Park in the Collins Chabane Municipality. The Limpopo province has declared free from disease from September 2018 to date, assuming that there will be no any new cases and normal controls will then prevail.

During the year under review, the department focused on key strategic priorities which are aligned to the new growth path: the National Development Plan and Medium-Term Strategic Framework. The committee recommends that the department must at all costs avoid giving support to beneficiaries entangled in disputes as this often results in government funded properties being vandalised. The department must make sure that conflicts are first resolved before such beneficiaries can be granted support.

I will not be doing justice to the young people of this country if I don't speak about inequalities that are facing young people in our country. The greatest enemies of our people, and young people in particular, still are unemployment, poverty and inequality. We would like to see more young and previously disadvantaged farmers claiming their rightful spaces in the mainstream economy.

In conclusion, working together we can do more to ensure a united, peaceful and prosperous society. Each one of us has a role to play. No one should be reduced to being a spectator. We need to focus on the promotion and development of farming as well as the preservation and management of our resources with a view to maximising the contribution towards economic development, job opportunities, social cohesion and nation-building. I thank you. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Olaiya. Thank you very much, honourable Member, you have managed to stick to your time. Hon Seshoka, your three minutes starts now.

MR SESOKA

Thank you, Hon Speaker, and greetings once more to the honourable Members present here. There are always funny reasons advanced for every failure by the government, especially this department with regard to meeting the planned targets. Most of these reasons advanced are half-truths and extremely unbelievable and unconvincing. The responsibility of finding solutions to the problems affecting young people, especially young farmers such as unemployment, low representation with political processes and social exclusion lies exclusively with the government.

It is noteworthy that 3 000 hectares of agricultural land could not be protected or rehabilitated to improve agricultural production as expected or targeted. During the period under review, the department failed to support 3 200 smallholder producers, instead only 896 were assisted, which goes against what was planned. The capital assets or the infrastructure expenditure in the second term was low and not as expected.

This simply means that the development and service delivery has been derailed to the disadvantage of the people of Limpopo. The agricultural infrastructure is critical in the development of agriculture and the local economy for the benefit of our people. The departments have an obligation to achieve all planned targets in the interest of service delivery, especially against the service delivery backlog in the province. We must condemn in the strongest terms the laziness to spend budgeted funds in order to achieve planned targets and service delivery.

The department has fallen short of almost all their planned targets, meaning that someone is sleeping on the job; the next thing is that they will be acquiring services from consultants to do the same work they are paid for. This government has run out of ideas. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Seshoka. Hon Smalle, you are recognised.

MR SMALLE

Thank you, Hon Speaker, and good morning to the Members of this august House, especially the MEC for Agriculture. It is of great concern that the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development spent 99,9% of the budget and 99,7% of the allocated conditional grants in a year under review, but only achieved 88% of its set targets. Only 17 out of the 25 targeted farm infrastructure projects were completed under the grant allocation.

The lack of outputs, especially under the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme will have long-lasting effects on beneficiaries, especially post COVID-19. The department completed 25 capital projects at a cost of R77 million, but with no clear plan on the beneficiation and sustainability thereof. The Lebowakgomo Abattoir is an example of such a project where lack of a clear plan left the abattoir abandoned. Our two agricultural colleges had a pass rate of only 68%. Only 68 students graduated, and surely this output cannot justify a budget of R134 million. Our colleges must further align themselves with the agricultural needs of the province through advanced specialisation in area specific fields of excellence informed by the industry and the social needs to attract more students.

Graduates need to be absorbed into the system and the department needs a clear strategy on how to achieve this. The frequent failure of the Animal Health Programme to achieve set targets, specifically the ones with the number of visits directly related to the FMD, must be addressed. The budget of this programme needs to be revisited as it has become clear that the department cannot adequately address the outbreak of food-and-mouth disease in our province. Clarity on the sixth agro-processing plants is needed with regard to regular updates on the status of these projects, the running costs and the profits as well as who the beneficiaries are of these projects. The Auditor-General flagged some concerns for the year under review.

THE SPEAKER

Hon Smalle, your time is up.

MR SMALLE

In conclusion ...

THE SPEAKER

Your three minutes is finished, I have a watch.

MR SMALLE

You must communicate that to us.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Hon Maritz is not present.

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER

[inaudible]

THE SPEAKER

For who? Chair, Hon Masekoameng, your three minutes starts now.

MR MASEKOAMENG

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am going straight to the point because of the time. It gives me a great pleasure to be afforded this opportunity to debate the 2018/19 quarterly financial and performance reports and Annual Report of this department. The reports for all the quarters are here.

Job creation is a key to the mandate of the ANC-led government, and as such it cannot be underestimated in creating the most needed jobs in order to reach the targets we set for ourselves in terms of job creation. There is no doubt that agriculture has an important role to play in attaining the government vision of poverty, eradication and creating jobs for our people and creating better lives for our communities. We, therefore, call for the dedication of this department at this stage to turn around the agricultural sector, and make agriculture a project viable and self-sustainable.

We are happy with the efforts this department is making in terms of advisory services to the smallholder farmers in supporting households with agriculture food production initiatives. We also noted the department's efforts in terms of veterinary interventions, resulting in more dipping sessions of communal cattle. This will also help the department to inspect more animals and identify the disease for their outbreak. Working together, we encourage this department to ensure that underexpenditure, irregular, unauthorised and wasteful expenditure must be avoided at all costs.

The department reported that 17 projects were completed while four projects were still with the service providers and other four projects were delayed due to standard of infrastructure procurement and delivery management compliance. The committee ...
[INTERJECTION]

THE SPEAKER

Your time is up. Honourable chair, your time is up.

MR MASEKOAMENG

[inaudible]

THE SPEAKER

Yes. Thank you very much. Can we move to Item 7.2: Consideration and Adoption of the 2019/20 Reports of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development? Committee chair, the floor is yours.

MR MASEKOAMENG

On behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, I, Masekoameng Mmabogahla Isaiah, hereby move that the report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on 2019/20 First Quarter Financial and Performance Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as it appears on the ATC be adopted as the report of this honourable House. I move accordingly.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you. Is there any seconder? Hon Selamolela, you are recognised.

MR SELAMOLELA

Thank you, Speaker. I, Selaelo Donald Selamolela of the African National Congress, stand to support the motion by the honourable committee chair.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Selamolela. Committee chair, it is your turn.

MR MASEKOAMENG

On behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, I, Masekoameng M I, hereby move that the report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on 2019/20 Second Quarter Financial and Performance Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as it appears on the ATC be adopted as the report of this honourable House. I move accordingly.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Masekoameng. Is there any other seconder? Hon Mdaka, you are recognised.

MR MDAKA

I, Falaza Mdaka, stand to second the motion as raised by the chairperson, Hon Isiah Masekoameng. I so move. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Mdaka. Committee chair, the floor is yours.

MR MASEKOAMENG

On behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, I, Masekoameng Mmabogahla Isaiah, hereby move that the report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on 2019/20 Third Quarter Financial and Performance Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as it appears on the ATC be adopted as the report of this honourable House. I move accordingly.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Is there any other seconder? Hon Seono, you are recognised.

MS SEONO

Thank you, Hon Speaker. I, Mmaishibe Rebecca Seono, rise to second the motion as presented by Hon Masekoameng. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Committee chair, the floor is yours.

MR MASEKOAMENG

On behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, I, Masekoameng Mmabogahla Isaiah, hereby move that the report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development on 2019/20 Fourth Quarter Financial and Performance Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as it appears on the ATC be adopted as the report of this honourable House. I move accordingly.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Is there any seconder? Hon Monama, you are recognised.

MR MONAMA

Thanks, Madam Speaker. I, Rodgers Monama, rise to support the chair, Hon Masekoameng for the adoption of the report. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Monama. We shall now refer to the Speakers' List. Our first speaker on the list is Hon Simon Mathe. You have 10 minutes to debate. [APPLAUSE]

MR MATHE

Thank you very much, Hon Speaker; Deputy Speaker; Members of the Executive Council; the Chief Whip of the Majority Party; Members of the provincial Legislature and members of our Chapter 9 and 10 institutions. However, I need to concede and

accept that as part of humanity, I will be entering a very frustrating process – frustrating in the sense that I am obligated to also extend greetings to Hon Seshoka. [LAUGHTER]

Agricultural development remains four times more effective in reducing hunger and poverty. It is in this context that we create sustainable agricultural development by improving the quality of life in rural areas and also ensuring food security. The portfolio committee met with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. That meeting was convened in compliance with the provisions of section 114 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 as amended and read together with Rule 81(1)(b), (c) and (d) of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislature of Limpopo province as adopted on 28 February 2017.

Alongside hard work and effort, capabilities and the opportunities that flow from development enable individuals to live their lives to which they aspire. The department is focused on the implementation of the 9-point plan, particularly on improving the agricultural value chain as well as unlocking the potential of small, medium and macro enterprises. The following identified priorities are guided by the Limpopo Development Plan:

- Increased smallholder agricultural production;
- Development of agroprocessing and value addition enterprises;
- Employment creation through upstream and downstream; and
- Support agribusiness on finance and market access;

A developmental state builds the capabilities of people to improve their own livelihood while intervening to correct the historical inequalities. Neither the government nor the market can develop the necessary capabilities on their own.

Honourable Members, we must understand that farming is a basic human right which we must toil to realise and achieve the set target on Farmers Support Programme. We must do so because government is expected to meet progress in tackling poverty, inequality and unemployment. It is in this regard that the agricultural sector will have to improve the quality of service delivery and ensure that supported farmers are able to sustain themselves. The department is encouraged to be on track in this regard because it is involved in a number of interventions that are aimed at promoting farming.

As the committee on Agriculture and Rural Development having scrutinised the 2018/19 financial year reports, we recommend that the department must give progress report on Fetsa Tlala programme amid noting the impact of drought, late rainfall and further making sure that opportunities for unemployed graduates and interns are filled as soon as they are vacant since there are many unemployed graduates who need such opportunities.

Honourable MEC, it is high time that we confront challenges facing youth very seriously, and of which it is employment. Government's noisy rhetoric on its initiatives in getting better the lives of the youth is like popular deep house beats. The continuous adoption of policies with no clear implementing strategy and no evidence showing

whether the so-called initiatives are bearing fruits in the lives of the youth or not, is totally froing and needs to be addressed. Hunger can't be postponed.

The NDP presents a long-term strategy to increase employment and broaden opportunities through education, vocational training and work experience, public employment programmes, health and nutrition, public transport and access to information. While there are quick wins to be achieved in each of these areas, the strategies will take time to have a large-scale effect on poverty. That is the main reason why as the portfolio committee we appreciate the support given to the 3 074 households with agricultural food production initiatives against the planned target of 1 000. This reflects all colours of what President Nelson Mandela stood for. Those that are saying they are government-in-waiting, those who are saying they are government-in-waiting, let them wait and see if they don't get tired and sleep as they are lonely now and alone, lonely and alone, lonely and alone.

The purpose of administration is to manage, formulate policy directives and priorities and ensure the appropriate support services to all programmes with regard to financial, human and information resources. The Administration programme is confined to support service delivery for the institution as a whole and is not specific to the programmes. During the quarter under review, the department spent R104,8 million or 26,1% on the Administration programme. This had four performance indicators that target in the quarter under review.

The department achieved 100% in performance output indicators for the fourth quarter. In this regard, it is cum laude in academic language, Hon Seshoka. The Sustainable Resource Management programme had an adjusted budget of R116,2 million for the 2018/19 financial year. The programme expenditure during the fourth quarter was R53,3 million, which translates to 45,9% of the programme's budget. This programme had 12 performance indicators for the quarter under review, and 10 were achieved on average.

As the committee, we must once again applaud the department for ensuring that at all times the planned targets are realistic and achievable. The department achieved the planned targets to rehabilitate 5 000 hectares of land to improve agricultural production and exceeded the targets on the number of green jobs created, the number of hectares of land cleared of alien invasive plants and weeds and the number of awareness campaigns on land care.

Research and Technology Development Services is aimed at providing expert and needs-based research and development objectives in order to enhance agricultural production. This programme had an adjusted budget of R58,1 million for the 2018/19 financial year. During the quarter under review, the department spent a total of R13,4 million, translating into 23,1% of the adjusted budget for the programme. The programme had a total of six performance indicators and targets, and all of them were achieved as planned. That is 100% achievement.

Members, if poverty and inequality are reduced without demonstrably changed ownership patterns, the country's progress will be turbulent and tenuous. Similarly, the social cohesion needs to anchor the strategy. If Limpopo registers progress in deracialising ownership and control of the economy without reducing poverty and inequality, transformation will be superficial.

The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development having considered the 2018/19 Annual Report of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, hereby moves that this committee report be adopted as a report of this House. I thank you so much. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Mathe. Hon Seshoka, the floor is yours.

MR SESOKA

Thank you, Hon Speaker and greetings to all Members present in the House. The humanity in me dictates that I must also return favour and send the special greetings to Hon Mathe. [APPLAUSE] The EFF notes the underexpenditure by the department, especially programme 7 with a serious disappointment. Structured agricultural training is critical in creating opportunities for both women and young people in the agricultural sector. It is also important for the support of emerging black farmers for a sustainable development. This programme only achieved 3% instead of 50% of its second quarter targets, which is unacceptable, and it must never be allowed to happen.

Underexpenditure cuts across all departments of government, and it has become a norm acceptable and allowed by government, hence nothing is done to stop it. Why is it difficult for this government to understand that underexpenditure affects service delivery? This province has a serious service delivery backlog and communities continue to suffer because the departments do not spend their budgets as expected.

The EFF notes and welcomes the assistance of more than 4 000 farmers with disaster relief scheme in the year under review. However, the farmers often complain about the time the fodder is delivered to them because by then they would have lost their livestock, which renders the relief scheme not suitable for the purpose. The department must know better that timing in this sector is critical. Our farmers are set to fail because those who are entrusted with the responsibility to assist them are sleeping on duty with no consequences because the Mathabatha administration is weak. The government must prioritise emerging black farmers for proper support, not half-cooked support that is targeting quantity than quality. As we speak, the department cannot parade emerging farmers that were transformed into commercial farming with the support of government while programmes and financial resources are available.

We dispel the myth that food security in this country is attributed to the white farmers only. Black farmers too, if given the necessary support, can ensure that there is food security in South Africa, in particular Limpopo province. The EFF is disappointed that smallholder farmers continue to be marginalised by receiving scanty support, resulting in total collapse of their farming operations. Many of them had to close shops because government support is not forthcoming, hence local economy is going through serious difficulties.

We are shocked that only 343 households were supported with agricultural food production initiatives as opposed to 2 000 as planned targets. The department must present a detailed report to this House accounting on why this food initiative meant to

change the lives of our people is being sabotaged. What did our people do to this government to deserve this kind of treatment? This is a very important subprogramme meant to alleviate poverty among our people and set them free from hunger, but those sitting in the echelons of power, eating with fork and knife do not seem to comprehend this. It is disturbing to learn that of the 6 700 smallholder producers targeted, not a single smallholder producer was supported with agricultural advice in the third quarter of the year under review. How do black brothers and sisters succeed in this farming operation without the support of government? This government hates black farmers so much that they set them up for failure, making them a laughing stalk to their white farmer counterparts. This criminal behaviour towards our small-scale farmers must come to an end. We will make sure that people are held accountable.

“The government of the people by the people for the people” is just an empty slogan by the current government. The EFF government will make it a reality and not play with the emotions of our people. The EFF government will continue that young and emerging black farmers in all agricultural development nodes are prioritised and receive technical and financial support as a minimum, and that a minimum of 50% of them should be women. Furthermore, the EFF government will actively promote subdivision of agricultural land and will ensure that our new vision for agrarian reform is premised on the sound and viable principle for promoting small-scale farming.

We will continue to expose the weak and the coward government of the ANC for their failure in the best interest of our people. This government is best known for fear of white people more than delivering service to the people. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Seshoka. Hon Smalle, it is your turn.

MR SMALLE

Thank you, Hon Speaker. The theme of International Day of Rural Women that was marked on 15 October is “Building rural women’s resilience in the wake of COVID-19”. It should create awareness of these women’s struggles, their needs, and the critical and the key role in society. Discriminatory gender norms and practices impede women’s exercise of land and property rights. Women’s land, tenure, and security is also threatened and exacerbates the gender gaps in agriculture and food security. Gender-responsive investments by the department in rural areas have never been more critical.

The Farmer Support and Development programme, which is programme 3, should specifically acknowledge rural women as a contributor towards food security at grassroots level and include rural women as beneficiaries to all subprogrammes. I hope that we will see a breakdown of programme beneficiaries per gender going forward. Farmer support to subsistence farmers is the only support these farmers receive.

It is, therefore, extremely concerning that out of the target of 4 500, the department supported 796 smallholder producers, thus falling short of the target by 3 704 farmers because bits for production inputs were nonresponsive, which necessitated the readvertisement of the tender. This underachievement was also reported in the first

quarter. This delay meant no planting which caused hunger and distress in our villages which could have been avoided through prudent management.

During the period under review, the outbreak of FMD brought the movement of cattle and cloven-hoofed animals to a halt nationally. The lingering outbreak maintained a nationwide moratorium on livestock auctions which caused economic havoc in the red meat industries. Low prices for beef, job losses in the industry and the ban on auctions were some of the challenges. Farmers lost up to R3 500 per head on cattle as a result of the FMD. It was the subsistence and small-scale farmers that were hardest hit. As a result of the outbreak, the World Organisation for Animal Health suspended the FMD-free status of South Africa.

Consequently, any exports where FMD-free zone attestation is required cannot be certified. The lack of biosecurity control measures is further threatening our agricultural industry as a whole, which includes game farming. This is a huge cause for concern. The outbreak showcased the department's lack of resources to effectively deal with the FMD which urgently needs to be revised to curb future outbreaks. A well-regulated and controlled red meat industry in Limpopo has a huge export potential, which in turn will be a catalyst to job creation and prosperity for all our farmers.

The lack of upkeep and the efficiency of the Mara Cattle Research Station is concerning, specifically on the following matters:

- The shocking state of accommodation for more than 100 employees that are living there;
- The non-functional laboratory;
- The lack of proper fencing around the 11 500 hectare farm, which allows for easy access for criminals and poachers;
- The cattle are only tagged in the ear and should be branded to make it more difficult to sell if stolen; and
- The lack of security, except at the main gate.

The revitalisation of the Mara Cattle and Research Station will enable the facility to play a critical role in the fight against the foot-and-mouth disease in our province. I thank you, Hon Speaker.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Smalle. Chair, Hon Masekoameng, it is your turn for 10 minutes.

MR MASEKOAMENG

How many minutes?

THE SPEAKER

It's 10 minutes.

MR MASEKOAMENG

Thanks, Hon Speaker. Honourable Members, you know that opposition parties always oppose. We are the leading government. There is no party in the country that can lead this country except the ANC. So, we don't want to waste time. We want to deliver.

As the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, we want this department to seriously monitor and supervise operations of the land reform projects. With regard to the irrigation schemes and all infrastructure projects within the department, I would like to reiterate that as a committee, we are not happy with the condition of the irrigation scheme and land reform projects. I think my colleagues have already alluded to other comments, including Hon Mathe.

From what we have observed in the majority of irrigation schemes and land reform projects, we have concluded that these projects have been neglected for the past financial years, and very little was done to maintain, market and develop them.

In the past, irrigation schemes formed an important role in food security for our rural communities. Though irrigation schemes initiatives were used to put food on their table, and such were able to put hunger and poverty away. Many families were able to pay school fees through the money they got from irrigation schemes. Since we already know these challenges in agriculture, we request the department to devise solutions for them and to make sure that irrigation schemes and land reform projects such as Zebediela Citrus and Magoebaskloof projects are maintained, marketed and are viable to such an extent that they can attract job creation and economic growth.

Throughout 2019/20 First, Second, Third and Fourth Quarter Reports, the portfolio committee was not convinced by the low expenditure pattern displayed by the department. It is, therefore, somehow not a surprise to the portfolio committee when during the end of 2019/20 fourth quarter, the department underspent by R76,4 million. Farmers out there are in desperate need for assistance from this department. Therefore, it is a cause for concern that the department underspent by R53,4 million in Farmer Support programme. The portfolio committee appreciated the efforts made in supporting smallholder farmers and supporting food disaster relief scheme. It is further appreciated that the department made strides in cutting and containing food-and-mouth disease outbreak during the 2019/20 financial year.

In conclusion, we are happy with the department. We will continue to advise them to deliver fertilizers for our people. Thank you very much. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, honourable chair. We shall now call upon the honourable MEC for Agriculture to respond to the debate.

THE MEC FOR AGRICULTURE

Thank you, Hon Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Hon Chief Whip of the majority party, honourable Members of the Legislature and colleagues, I greet you all in the name of food security. Hon Speaker, thanks for the opportunity to respond to the issues raised.

The year 2020 has been a difficult year. At some stage, we even thought that food provision was at risk. Thanks to all our farmers who could not rest at all times.

On the update on foot-and-mouth disease, this disease causes a serious risk to the economy of the whole country. It is our responsibility to regularly keep the committee and the House updated on the issue. We have seen the commitment of the committee members during the last outbreak.

On conflict in irrigation schemes, this is an issue which needs the commitment and assistance from both angles. As for community challenges, we are currently engaging the traditional leaders, and in this regard, CoGHSTA will be of assistance. At all costs, we shall uphold supporting the same old farmers and opt for new emerging farmers.

As the executive authority, we shall together with my team make sure that the 2018/19 findings are addressed and do not happen again. As we speak now, many of our projects are facing serious challenges. The Lebowakgomo Abattoir together with the Office of the Premier and LEDET are currently finalising some outstanding issues. The report will follow.

On Zebediela Citrus, this project has a history of beneficiaries fighting amongst themselves. With your support, we shall try by all means that the project should return to its best state.

On Mapouka Manabadi Estate, everybody by now is aware of the serious conflict around this project. However, we are trying by all means to resolve the dispute.

On Madzivhandila and Tompi Seleka agricultural colleges, renovations at Tompi Seleka were stopped because of the community conflict with regard to the employment. However, the municipality is busy addressing the situation. Renovations at Madzivhandila are proceeding well. Students from these two colleges are dropping out because of various personal and economic reasons. We must, however, indicate that with effect from January 2021, the colleges will now be under the Department of Basic Education.

The Farmer Support programme is essential for the food provision of the country, and a list will definitely be forwarded to the portfolio committee with the names of farmers. Fetsa Tlala programme reduces hunger and poverty amongst our communities. Veterinary Services is an ongoing programme. Our greatest challenge is the budget cut.

I wish to thank the portfolio committee led by the chairperson, Hon "Messina" Masekoameng for the oversight role during a difficult time. We have witnessed you visiting most of our projects even during the COVID-19, risking your lives. To the chairperson and your team, I say your support and oversight role is mostly welcome. I thank you, Hon Speaker. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, honourable MEC. We shall now move to Item 7.3: Consideration and Adoption of the 2018/19 Reports of the Portfolio Committee on CoGHSTA. Committee chair, it's over to you.

MS APHIRI

A ke go leboge Mospikara. Ke le Mokgadi Johanna Aphiri, ke ema mo legatong la komiti ya Lefapha la Dintlo le Magoši go ala raporoto ya kotara ya bone ya ngwaga wa ditšelete wa 2018/19 gore Ntlo ye ya go hlomphega e e amogele bjalo ka raporoto ya yona. Ke a leboga.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Is there any seconder? Hon Lekganyane, you are recognised.

MS LEKGANYANE

Thank you very much, Hon Speaker. I, Hon Nakedi Maria Lekganyane, hereby second the motion as presented by the honourable chairperson. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you. Committee chair, the floor is yours.

MS APHIRI

Thanks once more, Hon Speaker. I, Mokgadi Johanna Aphiri, rise on behalf of the Portfolio Committee on CoGHSTA to table the Annual Report for the 2018/19 financial year as it appears on the ATC for consideration and approval by this august House. I so move.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Is there any seconder? Hon Monyamane, you are recognised.

MS MONYAMANE

Thank you, Hon Speaker. I, Sarah Monyamane, rise to second the motion by Hon Aphiri, the chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on CoGHSTA. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much, Hon Monyamane. We shall now refer to the Speakers' List. Hon Monyamane, you have 10 minutes.

MS MONYAMANE

Thank you, Hon Speaker. Hon Speaker; Deputy Speaker; Members of the Executive Council; honourable Members, good morning.

The committee noted that the department's audit opinion was stagnant with an unqualified audit opinion. This was historical because it recurred from prior years with material misstatements. Matters of emphasis were on the employee receivables to the amount R21,912 million. We must report that this huge amount included staff debt of

520 and fruitless and wasteful expenditure of R21,393 million. The department should work hard to get a clean audit. The executive authority should ensure that the accounting officer develops a comprehensive and sustainable plan that will assist the department to get a clean audit in the next coming years.

The department should also strengthen its procurement unit. Section 38(1)(c) of the Treasury Regulations requires the accounting officer to take respective and appropriate steps to prevent irregular expenditure arising from awarding of contracts.

The accounting officer should ensure that oversight responsibility regarding performance reporting, compliance and internal controls are exercised. The department should submit a report on the issue of staff debt and how it was addressed. The recommendation made by the office of the Auditor-General must be implemented.

The ANC took a decision during the 1994 democratic breakthrough that shacks will be eliminated and decent houses will be built for the community. The department's decision to build shacks in Talana, Tzaneen, and in Dresden, Tubatse, is not in line with the housing policy of the ANC as the ruling party. Even though the situation in Talana was being addressed under the COVID-19 conditions, two houses that the department could have built would have given hope to the community. There are many incomplete houses that contractors could not finish. Some of these incomplete houses were raised by communities as we interacted with them.

The department should have attended to these challenges in prior years, and this is a cause for concern to the portfolio committee. We would also like to report that there are some of the houses built by the department that are occupied illegally. Those recipients were not approved by the department. The department is also leaving the matter unchallenged. These illegal occupants are even threatening the approved recipients with death. If a matter is left unchallenged, the department must know that the communities will take advantage that even if they are not approved recipients, they can stay in those houses ... [INTERJECTION]

THE SPEAKER

Hon Monyamane, your time is up. My apologies because I said 10 minutes instead of 3 minutes. [LAUGHTER] Thank you very much. Hon Buthane Jossey, you may take the floor

MR SESHOKA

Hon Speaker, on behalf of the EFF, I would like to make a submission that Hon Jossey Buthane to make it. Therefore, we will submit a soft and hard copy to your office for further processing. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Okay. Hon Smalle, you are allocated three minutes.

MR SMALLE

Thank you, Hon Speaker. For the year under review, CoGHSTA incurred expenditure just shy of R1 billion, the highest of all provincial departments and entities. During the same period, the department's charges, our 27 municipalities, incurred R3,4 billion in unwanted expenditure. Underperformance, deliberate underperformance, corruption and the incompetency of officials of CoGHSTA and the 27 municipalities need to stop. Service delivery, job opportunities and investments in our towns are being compromised. Corruption has reached a stage that disciplinary processes and investigations are being used to avoid any forms of accountability and actions against those who have stolen from this government to benefit themselves at the expense of the nearly 2,9 million unemployed people who are desperately seeking for job opportunities.

The aftermath of the VBS looting is now affecting our municipalities that are trying to recover from the big VBS losses by implementing cost-containment measures and have introduced recovery plans. Municipalities affected by losses in VBS took an average of 129 days to pay their creditors. The department showed dismal performance in its four programmes, and only 66% of its targets were set and met. The department's Human Settlements programme ought to provide dignity through decent houses to poor and marginalised people. It is unacceptable for the department to achieve only 28% against the target set. The go-to-explanation is always the late appointment of these contractors.

Honourable MEC, contractors will always be appointment late if officials are not being held accountable for negligence or lack of planning. How many of these underperforming contractors have been removed from the database? With the assistance of HDA, only 10 533 new houses were built. Eliminating the 80 000 houses backlog unfortunately still remains out of reach. Given the sad state of our municipalities, it is surprising that programme three, Cooperative Governance, achieved 83% of its set targets. The support given to our municipalities is clearly not adequate and the programme's KPIs need to be readdressed so that the real state of affairs can be addressed.

Internal control weaknesses expose public funds to abuse. The A-G noted that the internal audit units are generally inadequately staffed and the Mayors and councils are too slow to respond to the action plans and the recommendations due to the lack of commitment. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Smalle. Committee chair, Hon Aphiri, you may take the floor.

MS APHIRI

Thanks, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, in the 2018/19 financial year, the Legislature approved the budget of R2,5 billion to implement its programmes, and this was approved in accordance with the department's APP. This amount is more than the 2017/18 financial year's by 8,9%. The department underspent the budget by R91 million while in the 2017/18 financial year R38,9 million was underspent. The committee noted this regression, and the department must allude to this House the challenges that led to underspending. The executive authority must implement consequence management with regard to this underspending.

It is important that when the department makes plans, it includes training of finance officials as one of the targets. The committee noted that finance officials with the qualifications they possess do not have the capacity to spend money properly and to prepare annual financial statements. This is seriously concerning because year after year, the A-G raises material findings on the reliability of the reported performance information. The committee was of the view that the finance officials are experts on the implementation of the Public Finance Management Act. What we observed while scrutinising the annual report gave us a different picture. The proof of our observation was that the A-G reported that the financial statements reported for auditing were not prepared in accordance with the prescribed financial reporting framework and supported by full and proper records as required by section 40(1)(a) and (b) of the Public Finance Management Act. The committee also noted that this is a serious offence committed by the officials in the department.

The department achieved 63% of the performance targets set for the fourth quarter. It did not achieve its targets on CRU (community residential units) and social housing units in all the quarters. In fact, not a single CRU was completed in the 2018/19 financial year. The Human Settlements programme's underexpenditure amounted to R76 million. The MIG spending by the municipalities needs to be monitored on a quarterly basis. About R104 million was stopped and reallocated to other municipalities from other municipalities which did not spend it in the province. This underspending trend has been persistent for time immemorial. The MIG spending by municipalities was at 90,8% at the end of the financial year compared to 92,4% in the 2017/18 financial year. This is, to some extent, affected by the high vacancy rate in section 53 posts mainly CFOs, Municipal Managers and technical services.

The department received an unqualified audit opinion in this financial year like it was in the case in 2017/18. The main issues raised by the A-G are recordkeeping that serves as audit evidence and the UIFW (unauthorised, irregular, fruitless and wasteful) expenditure. Accumulative irregular expenditure amounted to R884 million. The audit outcomes of municipalities are likely to improve although none received a clean audit and unqualified audit opinion regressed. There is no correlation between the performance of the department in achieving its set targets and the expenditure. The department spent 95,8% of its budget, but achieved 58% of its annual target ... [INTERJECTION]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, chairperson.

MS APHIRI

Thank you, Hon Speaker. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Let us move to Item 7.4. Consideration and Adoption of the 2019/2020 Reports of the Portfolio Committee on CoGHSTA. Committee chair, the floor is yours.

MS APHIRI

Ke a go leboga, Mospikara. Nna ke le Mokgadi Johanna Aphiri, ke ema mo legatong la Komiti ya Photefolio ya Kgoro ya Pušo Tirišano, Dintlo le Magoši go ala Pego ya Kotara ya Mathomo ya Ngwaga wa Ditšelete wa 2019/20, gore Ngwako wo wa go hlomphega o e amogele bjalo ka Pego ya wona. Ke a leboga.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, honourable chair. Do we have a seconder? Hon Mokaba, you may take the floor.

MS MOKABA-PHUKWANA

Tla ke go leboge, Mospikara wa rena. Ke re, ke le Mmapula Mokaba-Phukwana ke ema mo go tlatša seo se boletšwego ke modulasetulo wa rena wa CoGHSTA. Ke a leboga.

THE SPEAKER

Committee chair, you may proceed.

MS APHIRI

Nne Muhulisei Mokgadi Johanna Aphiri, ndi takuwa ndo imela Komiti ya Mavhusale, Madzulele na Vhuhosi uri ... Can you protect me, Hon Speaker?

THE SPEAKER

Order, Members!

MS APHIRI

... ndi netshedze muvhigo wa kotara ya vhuvhili ya አwaha wa muvhalelano wa 2019/20 u itela ndugiselo na u tanganedzwa nga Nndu i thonifheaho. Aa. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Is there a seconder? Hon Selane, you may take the floor.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF COMMITTEES

Tla ke go leboge, Mme Mospikara. Ke tšeа sebaka se, e le nna, Che Selane go thekga modulasetulo wa Komiti ya CoGHSTA. Ke a leboga.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you very much. Committee chair, you may take the floor.

MS APHIRI

Mina, Mokgadi Johanna Aphiri, ndza yima ndzi yimela Komiti ya Mfumo wa Miganga na Tindlu, ku susumeta leswaku Yindlu yi amukela xiviko xa matirhelo ya kotara ya vunharhu ya lembeximali ra 2019/20, leswaku xi va xiviko xa Huvo yo endla Milawu ya Limpopo. Ndza khensa. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Do we have a seconder? Hon Matlou, you may the floor.

MR MATLOU

Ndzi khensile, mufambisi wa ntirho. Xipikara, mina, Joshua Leswafu Matlou, ndzi lava ku seketela mutshamaxitulu wa Komiti ya CoGHSTA. Inkumu.

THE SPEAKER

Re a leboga. Committee chair, you may take the floor.

MS APHIRI

Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Portfolio Committee on CoGHSTA to table the Fourth Quarter Performance Report for the 2019/20 financial year for consideration and approval by the august House. I so move.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, honourable chair. Do we have a seconder? Hon Monama, you may take the floor.

MR MONAMA

Rena, madulaphate a ka difokeng, re ingwaya ka lekomane re agela dipolelo tše botse le mahlakore ao a tliego mošate legora. Re re, re a amogela. Re a lotšha.

THE SPEAKER

We shall now refer to the Speakers' List. Hon Mahasela, you may take the floor. [APPLAUSE]

MS MAHASELA

Hon Speaker, thank you. Hon Premier in absentia; Hon Deputy Speaker; Hon Chief Whip and everybody in the House, I greet you.

Hon Speaker, don't panic, today I have got the right material.

THE SPEAKER

Alright, thank you very much. [LAUGTHER]

MS MAHASELA

Hon Speaker, the department reported that it is improving its systems on the supply chain management; however, we must report that the systems before the improvement were historical and had repeat findings. The department reported that it had adopted the transversal supply chain management policy and developed the standard operating procedure in this section in the quarters under review. The other improvements reported to being achieved in this section are on the informal and technology management where BAUD system controller and the transversal user account management policy were adopted and implemented

There are key audit findings affecting municipalities in the quarters under review, and the department must put mitigating measures in place to ensure implementation of the recommendations. The department must play its oversight role in ensuring that municipalities do not deviate from supply chain management policy and legislation, for example, some municipalities did not follow competitive bidding processes when awarding contracts. Some municipalities' records are poorly managed. When the auditor needed supporting documents, they were not submitted.

The issue of asset management is of great concern. The department must report to the House about the management of assets in municipalities and what mitigating measures are put in place. The department must report to the House what measures are put in place concerning nonadherence to investment policies and legislation. This is telling that accounting officers in municipalities do not understand the Municipal Finance Management Act. The department reported that municipalities rely on consultants to prepare their annual financial statements for submission to the Auditor-General. The huge sums of money spent on consultants could be used to work towards ensuring that the appointment of consultants ends as they are not assisting in improving the outcomes of the audit.

The committee further reports to the House that the audit performance in municipalities leaves much to be desired. The municipalities must just improve when it comes to their audit opinion. The committee is aware that they remain stagnant with their audit opinion. The department should report to the House on actions taken regarding the late submissions – the late submission of the books that are supposed to be awarded to the department. These municipalities indicated that they need intervention. The department must develop measures to help these municipalities to improve their audit performance.

The personnel working in the finance section must also be retained on the Municipal Finance Management Act and the preparation of annual financial statements. The committee noted that with the usage of consultants, municipalities will not have progress. I support the adoption of CoGHSTA quarterly report. I thank you. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Mahasela. Hon Smalle, you may take the floor.

MR SMALLE

Ndo livhuwa, Muhulisei Mulangadzulo. Thank you. The backlog on debates undermines the effectiveness of this House in discharging its oversight responsibilities. This also creates a gap in the accountability cycle where consequences cannot be implemented against officials who are, for example, no longer in the employment of the department. It is critical that debates take place as soon as reports are available to not debilitate the reports' function as an early warning system to departments to areas of weak performances.

The Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs is failing in its mandates although the targets achieved are slightly higher than the previous year. Programme 1, Administration, only met 50% of its targets. MEC, there are only two reasons this. Targets set are an irrational cut-and-paste exercise and are based on previous performances, or officials were just not willing to achieve these targets. Budget expenditure of 96% further does not correlate with 72% of the targets achieved. This is the second year running that the department and the programme 2, Human Settlements, could not complete a single building on the community residential units and social housing units. The department cites disputes on relocation on the previous financial years and quarters as one of the excuses for the nonachievement of these targets on the indicator number of municipalities accredited on human settlements, and this time it is about the implementation protocols not in place for level 1 municipalities' accreditation. Failure to provide housing robs marginalised communities, not only of their constitutional right to adequate housing, but of their dignity, and there must be consequences for these delays. Programme 3, Cooperative Governance, met all 17 targets, and yet most municipalities cannot meet their constitutional and legislative obligations.

The Municipal Infrastructure Grant allocation in the year under review amounted to R2,9 billion, and municipalities are expected to spend at least 40% by the end of December to avoid being subjected to Treasury Regulations, and therefore, the possible withdrawal of this grant and loss of activity within this municipality. It is unacceptable that six municipalities have spent below 40%. The department should have early warning systems in place to monitor grant spending and assist municipalities to prevent such aggressive action by Treasury.

The A-G consolidated a report on municipal audit outcomes for the year 2018/19, and the A-G revealed that Limpopo municipalities spent 54% of their wage bill on their financial departments. The percentage is recorded as the highest nationally. In addition, R249 million was spent on consultants to improve audit outcomes. The biggest spenders on their finance departments in the province were Mopani District at 172%, Mogalakwena at 140% and Polokwane at 128%. The three municipalities also spent the most on consultants. However, from the audit outcomes, taxpayers did not benefit from the hefty wage bill and consultants appointed to improve the financial state of our municipalities.

Droughts across the province have reached disaster levels and are fast becoming one of the biggest challenges facing the department as they put a massive strain on the province's ailing water infrastructure. The A-G expressed concern over the trend of water shortages in the province and the inability by water authorities of water distribution that resulted in significant water losses due to the water leakages as well as the deteriorating water infrastructure, unauthorised consumption of water and inadequate systems to verify water purchased, amongst others. The province reported

water losses amounting to R341 million – an increase of R140 million compared to the previous year – which represented a substantial amount of revenue lost by municipalities that were already struggling financially. The department needs to implement a comprehensive plan to address the dilapidated water infrastructure in all of our municipalities to avert water shortages, something that this province can ill afford. Thank you, Hon Speaker.

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Smalle. Hon Aphiri, you may take the floor.

MS APHIRI

Madam Speaker, other honourable Members have reported on most of the issues that the department is facing as challenges. I am going to speak to those that they did not touch. The department reported that the purpose of the Administration programme is to provide strategic and effective leadership, management and administrative support to core functions of the department. As it provides the core functions, it reviews its policy on skills development initiatives, efficient and effective financial management, compliance with legislation by structures and systems; ensures best practices and champions the Batho Pele principles and service delivery.

The department planned to fill five vacant positions before the end of the fourth quarter, but could not fill even a single one. This indicated poor planning by the department. The target on the percentage of human representation at SMS level could also not be achieved in the fourth quarter as was the case in the previous quarter. The department's reports are silent on the employment of youth. The department, however, reported that the recruitment plan for 2019/20 was submitted and has not been approved by Treasury. The reason reported to the committee does not augur well as these targets were approved at the beginning of the financial year through the Annual Performance Plan.

We emphasise that it is poor planning on the side of the department. It must report to this House what percentage of the youth is in the employ of the department. The government resolved to establish the House of Traditional Leaders in this department to enable them to operate within the context of Cooperative Governance. The adjusted budget for this programme was R561,2 million and 59% has been spent in three quarters. This programme had five performance indicators and targets in the quarter under review and all were achieved. The committee applauds the department for that. However, we must indicate that there were concerns raised by some of the traditional leaders that their salaries were stopped. The committee is concerned that if the anomaly happened why the department would stop the salaries of those traditional leaders without consulting the House of Traditional Leaders and traditional leaders concerned. Such matters must be attended to before they get out of hand.

The committee recommends that progress on the following projects be reported to the House:

- Refurbishment of 19 traditional councils;
- Provision of furniture to the traditional councils;
- Construction of new traditional offices;

- Reconstruction of 185 traditional councils;
- King and queen councils;
- Provincial and local housing; and
- Appointment 638 headmen and women and filling vacancies in the traditional office.

During the quarters under review, some municipalities could not fill vacant and critical posts as reported in the previous quarter. It is worth noting that Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality had four vacant senior manager positions; Lephalale had three, including that of technical service manager; two for Musina, Vhembe Municipality at the end of December 2019. These vacancies, to some extent, have a bearing on planning and execution of MIG projects. There were indications in the second quarter report that the municipalities that spent less than 10% might not be able to spend 40% on their MIG allocation by December 2019.

The department must report to this House what strategies they employed to ensure that assistance is provided to these municipalities that spent 10% in the second quarter. The department must also report whether the challenges of MIG spending were not related to non-submission or late submission of the implementation plan for MIG projects in CoGHSTA. The committee noted with dismay that more than 54% of ward committees are dysfunctional. It should be mandatory for committee reports to be tabled in municipal council meetings for endorsement or discussion and to hold ward councillors responsible if such are not tabled.

Ward operational plans assist communities with their needs and priorities, and the department should urge all municipalities to develop and implement them. This is one other way of holding elected politicians accountable. The councillors as leaders of the local sphere of government interface with communities and concerns raised should assist the department on how to address service delivery issues. I so move, Madam Speaker, and I thank you. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, Hon Aphiri. We shall now call upon the honourable MEC for CoGHSTA to respond to the debate.

THE MEC FOR COGHSTA

Hon Speaker; Deputy Speaker; Hon Premier; Members of the Executive Council; Members of the Provincial Legislature; chairperson and members of the Portfolio Committee on CoGHSTA; our Chief Whip; ladies and gentlemen, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic took us to end of 2019/20 financial year under a heavy strain. We carry this strain into the current financial year albeit under more relaxed circumstances. The adverse circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic do not suspend our accountability. Even under these tough conditions, we continue to subject ourselves to the oversight of the Legislature and its committees.

I must indicate that as a department, we have put measures in place to improve our audit outcome, which has been stagnant on unqualified audit opinion for three years consecutively. We have put in place the audit remedial action plan to improve the recommendations of the portfolio committee and that of the A-G and that of Scopa

resolutions. We hope to improve our audit outcome. I should indicate that we have seen the underspending in the Human Settlements programme. Hence, we have started to appoint contractors on a term contract basis who have improved the outer years in terms of the performance on Human Settlements.

We agreed with the portfolio committee on improving our performance, more especially on the CRU programme which has not been able to be completed due to challenges we have faced with contractors who were on site. I must indicate that as a department, we have followed in terms of the preparation of the annual financial statements within the department which will also allow us to correct all the errors done in the previous financial year. I must indicate that the same cannot be mentioned with our municipalities. The observation of the portfolio committee on the use of consultants within our municipalities has been the concern of the department. As a result, together with the Department of Treasury, we have started to build capacity within our municipalities, starting from the appointment of capable finance officials to reduce the standing of consultants within our municipalities.

I must also indicate that with regard to the matters which deal with the support of performance of municipalities in terms of MIG, we have observed the poor performance within municipalities. We have increased support through MISA (Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency), through GTAC (Government Technical Advisory Centre) and our own unit within the department to ensure that we continually have monthly meetings with municipalities in order to track their performance. We should also indicate that the support that we are providing to municipalities in the appointment of senior managers has been improved, because we had a tracking system to make sure that municipalities quickly appoint senior managers as it was indicated with the Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality and Lephala Municipality. The situation, as we speak, has greatly improved in the sense that we have already appointed most of the senior managers. I must also indicate that the comments from the portfolio committee are taken seriously and we respect the oversight role of the portfolio committee.

We have fully cooperated with the portfolio committee throughout the 2019/20 financial year and, as a result, we have improved in terms of reporting on the performance in the Human Settlements about the number of houses that we are constructing every year. We are able to report to the portfolio committee the name of the contractor, the number of units and the place allocated to a contractor. With all the guidance we have received from the portfolio committee, the systems in the department are improving in the sense that we can understand each other, including targets that are set which were sent to be different from the standing agreement that we have.

I should thank the chairperson and members of the committee for the guidance throughout the 2019/20 financial year. We commit ourselves to implementing each of your resolutions to improve our work in the department. I thank you, Hon Speaker. [APPLAUSE]

THE SPEAKER

Thank you, honourable MEC. Thank you for the response.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Are there any announcements?

UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER

Lunch is served.

9. ADJOURNMENT

THE SPEAKER

Alright. This House is adjourned to Thursday, 22 October 2020 at 10:00 in the very same building. Thank you.

[THE HOUSE IS ADJOURNED]