SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT
THE MAIN KEY TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

Countries cannot hope to achieve economic growth if a labour-intensive employment market is not sustainable and poverty alleviation agendas are not implemented on a larger scale. That was the word from presenters and delegates alike at the 12th Regional Seminar for Labour Intensive Practices at Durban’s International Convention Centre.

Anna McCard, Maria Antonopolous and Dave Jennings addressed delegates at Tuesday’s morning session on the theme, Public Works Programmes and Income Support/Guarantees. All three speakers commented on the general trend of high unemployment rates which are primarily evident in developing countries. Their presentations examined whether the growth social life of poverty and joblessness could be tackled by infrastructure development – and how public and private sectors could work together to achieve this.

A key concern for Anna McCord was whether labour-intensive infrastructure spending could address poverty. “I think yes,” she said. For McCord though, “it is necessary to rethink the widely assumed association between increased infrastructure spending, social protection and sustained poverty alleviation.”

The focus of her discussion was the extent to which labour-intensive infrastructure creation contributes to employment and poverty alleviation, as the African Heads of State and Government at the Extraordinary Summit of the African Union on Employment and Poverty Alleviation had proposed in 2004.

McCord, who is affiliated to the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit’s School of Economics at the University of Cape Town said, “The adoption of labour-intensive approaches in infrastructure provision can increase aggregate employment, which, from a macro-economic perspective is positive. However, the adoption of such approaches and the resulting increase in construction sector employment is not likely to have significant or sustained impacts on social protection or poverty alleviation.”

She said that while labour-intensive methods offer temporary jobs, there was no sustained and significant benefit to this practice. “The promotion of labour-intensive employment does not represent itself the provision of sustained, ‘decent’ work or repeated episodes of work in each hungry season. For this reason it is not likely, in and of itself, to impact directly on sustained poverty alleviation in the context of a) mass long-term unemployment, in which case ongoing employment is required, or b) cyclicalseasonal underemployment, in which case repeated episodes of employment are required.”

While the assertion that employment is a major means to alleviate...
poverty on a sustainable basis is not itself controversial. McCord proposed that the controversial question of the explicit links between public sector investment in infrastructure, labour intensification, employment creation and sustainable poverty alleviation, the very subject of this conference, required critical engagement.

“When recent discussion of the rework concept and the social security provided by the International Labour Organisation’s take into account, the potential for investment in infrastructure and adoption of labour-intensive approaches to have a significant or sustained impact on social security, seems more questionable,” McCord said.

She questioned the nature of the link between labour-intensive approaches and the generation of productive and decent employment. This type of employment, she said, is significant on condition the unemployment problem is short-term, arising for example from a temporary labour disturbance such as drought. But, in most of sub-Saharan Africa, unemployment is either cyclic or ongoing, resulting from structural changes in the economy.

“The direct impact of an episode of labour-intensive employment to combat this is likely to be of limited value, and any sustained benefits are contingent on two things: Firstly the income-generating potential of the public goods created through the programme and service provision benefits arising, e.g., from improved access to healthcare or education resulting from clinic or school construction, or improved road access to existing facilities. If these indirect effects, which may or may not be significant, determine the social protection impact of labour-intensive employment,” McCord said.

“Poverty is a chronic problem, and it cannot be addressed by providing single episodes of employment.” McCord concluded.

Rana Antonopoulos of the Levy Institute noted that when ordinary people from some Latin American and African countries were asked what they considered to be the most pressing need that needed to be addressed, the number “unemployment and poverty”.

“Once we establish the idea that many people would like a job. If the right jobs were offered to them, we need to ask what kind of job the right kind, it’s truly heart wrenching when people ignore this very basic question,” she said.

Antonopoulos suggested that people change the mentality about growth as the single developmental objective and replace it with employment creation and improvement in the standard of living of people (jobs growth). She said that Employment Guarantee Schemes (EGS), Employer of Last Resort (EIR) and Expanded Public Works Programmes (EPWP) have a host of benefits including restoring dignity, direct and indirect income creation, direct and indirect job creation and asset creation.

“The access individuals have over the necessary and conveniences of life produced in an economy is mediated by three key institutions: market, households and the state. This reflects the income contribution that is made by government. Therefore, money income does not reflect command over the necessary and conveniences of life adequately.”

A concern that links to poverty is the great deal of time spent, especially by rural women, on unpaid work. This type of work is practised in the home and public domain. She said unpaid work

South Africa is seen as untypical in Africa concerning the high correlation between employment income and overall household income

referred to gaining access to basic inputs for cooking, cleaning, sanitation, food processing (e.g., collecting water and wood) and also in providing care work for children, the elderly and chronically ill through voluntary work, subsistence production and family businesses.

“Unreal distribution of income and lack of government services result in asymmetry of opportunity, households and between men and women, in gaining access to basic necessities, overhead unpaid work time that fills in infrastructural gaps is biased against poor people and women (and children),” she said.

Antonopoulos mentioned that countries such as India, Bangladesh, Argentina, Chile, Morocco, Ethiopia, South Africa, Korea, USA, New Zealand and Australia all had national guarantees programmes (EPIG). India, for example, has the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Right to Information Act), ongoing Social Audit. For Antonopoulos, though, they all required more of a human development approach. She pointed to South Africa’s Employment Equity Act, ownership in terms of assets and social inclusion and top-down support with bottom-up design.

Dave Jennings, Director of OFF Transport and chair of the UK’s Poverty Commission, focused on the low wages and job insecurity of informal workers in south Africa. Jennings had extensive experience in Africa, having worked in Lesotho, Mozambique, Ghana, and currently in Kenya on their Roads 2000 project studied in by Kenyan Deputy Minister Tanso during Sunday’s proceedings.

Within the context of Public Works Programmes and income Supplement projects, drawing on work by Saba (1997) and Bobo (1998), Jennings said that in evaluating unemployment and poverty in a broader context, South Africa is seen as untypical in Africa concerning the high correlation between employment income and overall household incomes, a situation related to the country’s history in terms of land distribution, subsistence farming, and payment in kind that occurs elsewhere in Africa, with the result that self-employment levels are low.

“Additionally, there is a sharp separation between the formal and informal sector wages, with mean wages in the formal sector ranging between 1997 and 2001, employment is also higher than urban employment and also increasing faster. When it comes to wage rates, there is few flexibility in wages, as minimum wages at provincial level are too high for the rural high unemployment situation,” he noted.

“In the primary focus is to examine how to move the EPWP from a supply-driven to a demand-driven programme, from being constrained by supply, to creating the supply to meet the demand, inherent in this is the concept of investing demands and mobility and moving the demand, basing the approach on the widely accepted concept of the ‘reservation wage’ (RWP), by which it is meant a wage, which is below the market wage and is not at all injurious to immediate employment. Importantly, questions are concerning the cost and affordability of such an approach, whether resources and capacity for implementation are available, and importantly, whether sufficient progress that employment can be created or not.

He added that the study throws up some broad issues for consideration when reviewing the EPWP approach. Among these are whether other resources and capacities required for implementation are available, and the effectiveness of an extensive EPWP as a social safety net is a question we need to answer,” Jennings concluded.

REBUILDING SOUTH AFRICA’S LABOUR MARKET 1994

In his presentation entitled “The National Skills Development Strategy and the EPWP”, Ismail Akhawaya, Chief Director at the national Department of Public Works, South Africa, yesterday highlighted the inequities of the pre-1994 dispensation and the legacy the current regime was faced with.

Akhawaya pointed to the economic power held by the white minority in apartheid South Africa, whilst the black majority was forced into low-paid jobs through “discriminated labour laws”, which removed rights and opportunities.

The new democratic dispensation was confronted with a labour market characterized by reduced labour employment opportunities in the formal economy, a low skills base in comparison with other economies, a rising level of unemployment due to an increasing population, and an education and training system that was not sufficiently responsive to changing needs, he said.

This resulted in an urgent need for Government intervention in order to meet the dual challenges of social development and the requirement to compete in the global economy. This implied the transformation of the labour force from a low skills base to one competent to high quality life-long learning, he added.

However, the South African Government soon realised that the country could only be achieved in partnership with employers, workers and communities – and subsequently embarked on a macroeconomic stabilization programme to manage the high levels of debt inherited. An industrial policy change to encourage increased competitiveness of industry, ruralized social development strategies aimed at equating social security measures and a human resources development strategy to deal with key issues related to rebuilding the national skills base.

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) was launched in May 2004, with the aim of creating employment opportunities for vulnerable groups and people with special needs, including people who have been excluded from the labour market.

A key was introduced, additional Akhawaya, which included a 1% payroll of which 70% is allocated to SETAs and 30% to the National Skills Fund, EPWP projects, said Akhawaya, “was a deliberate attempt by the public sector to create work opportunities coupled with training for the unemployed.”

The EPWP Employment Conditions Framework was embarked by Government and gazetted after extensive negotiations at NLED. This framework now allows for special conditions of employment to facilitate greater job creation in the context of Public Works Programmes.

“Employers may set rates of pay locally at self-funding rates on the basis of attracting workers away from more permanent employment and they now have reduced obligations amount of Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) payments, said Akhawaya. These concessions are however subject to other conditions, such as the entitlement to training.

The South African Department of Labour is launching a national skills trainingモデル and has provided funding for EPWP training since 2004. In addition to the above, the training includes special programmes such as personal finance management, HIV/AIDS, career guidance and environmental awareness is now offered.

Despite these interventions, challenges are still faced in terms of the logistics of implementing training given the project timeline, the availability of providers and institutional collaboration and capacity and resource availability in implementing bodies.

“These challenges, said Akhawaya, have resulted in the identification of certain interventions, e.g., prioritization training prior to commencement of projects, implementing inter- and intra-provincial transfers and establishing provincial resources to coordinate training interventions.

Akhawaya concluded by stating that other ongoing and well required consideration, such as negotiating alternate funding models with the Department of Basic Education, related to adult education training (ABET) and training options and training not being compulsory for certain projects related to specific job creations.

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Employment Guarantee Programme
The Champion for India's Poor

Contrary to general opinion, India is still considered a low-income economy, according to Dr Santosh Mehrotra, Senior Adviser (Rural Development), Planning Commission, Government of India, and Indira Hirway, of the Centre for Development Alternatives, Ahmedabad, India. At the outset of their discussions, both presenters suggested that other developing countries could follow India's pattern of allocating at least 0.3% of their GDP to addressing unemployment and poverty.

India's thirty-year history of Wage Employment Programmes (WEP) makes the country well placed to examine the viability of other employment interventions such as the Employment Guarantee Programme (EGP). Previously, the challenges of WEPs in India included low programme coverage, manifold 20% beneficiaries not being from the most needy group, bureaucracy-dominated planning, limited participation of communities in planning, work to women being longer than the stipulated norm of 30%, only 16-26 days employment provided to households, assets created not being durable, and high levels of corruption.

As a result of these challenges, the government had to look at an alternative WEP. Given the country's political leadership change in 2004, the new government placed greater emphasis on rural and agricultural development. Through this, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was passed. This transition required a redesign of the strategy of WEPs to address the shortcomings. While earlier WEPs were supply-driven, NREGA is demand-driven.

The new Act has resulted in a vast number of benefits, amongst others, providing a social safety net for vulnerable groups; eliminating distress migration through local employment generating employment in the most depauperated areas through productive works; providing opportunities to combine growth with equity, and enhancing livelihood security in rural areas by enhancing infrastructure.

The NREGA now provides work for 100 days in a financial year to every rural household whose adult member volunteers to do physically demanding, unskilled manual labour. Each employment seeker must be registered by the village council and each registered employment seeking household must be supplied with works.

The Act stipulates that employment must be given within 15 days of a person’s application for work. If it is not provided within 15 days, a daily unemployment allowance is paid by government. At least one member of each household and beneficiaries must be women.

While Hirway highlighted distortions in development in spite of the country's high growth rate, Mehrotra said, “The Indian economy is supposed to be doing well, but the poor at the bottom are frequently suffering from acute poverty, largely due to lack of purchasing power.”

For Hirway, NREGA can address these distortions through social infrastructure (for care, education, health, water and sanitation), economic infrastructure (for example, roads) to promote economic growth, infrastructure for agriculture, natural capital formation (related to land development, water augmentation, forestry), and assets (farm ponds and other forms of asset building) for private and public enterprises.

Some of the benefits the NREGA scheme offers include food provision for the poorest of the poor and a social insurance, while it cannot eradicate all poverty, it is a medium to long term it leads to training-intensive growth.

Hirway put forward major recommendations to strengthen the impact of the programme. These include massive information communication and education drives, ensuring guarantee and other entitlements, capacity building, strengthening planning components and addressing the vested interests of the rich.

“The NREGA Scheme has the potential to address some of the major concerns of the Indian economy. The need is, therefore, to tap this potential by learning from the success stories,” she concluded.

LESSONS from Kenya, Botswana and Lesotho

“Successful large-scale programmes of labour-intensive construction and maintenance have always been linked to specific training programmes,” Prof Robert McCutcheon told delegates attending the 12th Regional Seminar on Labour Intensive Practices, yesterday.

For every adequately trained handy-on site supervisors, jobs can be created for 5 to 25 untrained labourers. Prof McCutcheon said. Curricula should ultimately include numeracy, literacy, life skills and technical training.

The technical component should be aimed at educating labourers on design principles and materials, setting out works and the application of different specifications. General training would include issues relating to daily work planning, recording, reporting, monitoring and control, site safety, site administration, task setting and balancing, health and safety and should also be considered, McCutcheon said.

“The selection process is crucial in that it should be based on community recommendation, a matriculation certificate, an entrance exam and a basic life skills course as minimum requirements,” he added.

Trained handy-on site supervisors are technically competent, able to take and give instructions and capable of controlling teams consisting of 5 to 25 casual labourers. Should the example of programmes in South Africa and Lesotho be followed, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in South Africa and South Africa is able to implement effective exit strategies, he stated.

McCutcheon proposed that the unemployed should enter EPWP and obtain training and work experience under special conditions of employment. Once the necessary requirements have been fulfilled, exit strategies could include employment with a new employer, further education and training, better equipped work seekers, self-employment, or alternatively, ongoing employment with the same employer under normal conditions of employment.

Handy-on site supervisors are essential for McCutcheon. “Employment-intensive construction requires a sophisticated approach, which ultimately relies on a sophisticated training programmes,” he concluded.
MEASURING THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION

The Rapid Assessment of Poverty Impact (RAP) is a cost-effective methodology applied in assessing the impact of microscale employment and has been used with great success in Ethiopia, said Mr. Keku Osek-Bonus yesterday. He was delivering a paper on the RAP method used with great success in Ethiopia.

Indicators used for the RAP method are basic needs such as food, water, shelter and other daily essentials, assets, education, healthcare, social services and quality of life. This method provides an analytical, conceptual approach for assessing the quality of life of the intended beneficiaries,” Osek-Bonus explained.

Of the utmost importance, Osek-Bonus said, was the fact that these poverty indicators should be relevant and measurable, comparable and useful for monitoring purposes.

A public investment budget analysis in Mauritania indicated that for the period 2004 to 2006, public investment rose from 5.6% to 10.8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and that there was a potential 0.1% decrease in the unemployment rate. The study was also linked to the country’s key sectors such as education, health, water resources as well as rural and urban development.

Miller concluded that standardised methodologies and evaluation guidelines should be developed and that there should also be support for the creation of employment investment policy units within ministries of finance and that national as well as regional training centres are necessary for labour-based infrastructure development.

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Measuring the elements of RAP, he said this method defines poverty as “the state of deprivation of possessions and services considered necessary for a full and active life both in the short term and long term”.

The RAP data collection is twofold: using household and community questionnaires of which these samples are chosen randomly. RAP provides clear guidelines when choosing so-called “study” and “control” areas. The “study” areas generate impact in the form of ultimate changes in living conditions of beneficiaries and the “control” area allows for follow-up research which involves a before and after comparison with the “study” area.

Osek-Bonus said a study done in Ethiopia used segmented rural communities as samples and the selected households and communities showed that they were living below the poverty line. “The significant change in classes of poverty shows that there has been further deterioration in food security of households, hence greater reliance on food aid in the area,” he said.

**METHODS FOR EMPLOYMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

Mr. Steve Miller, Senior Policy Advisor, International Labour Organisation (ILO), stated that the methodologies for employment impact assessments were identified as a strategic priority to promote systematic employment impact assessment of public and private investment programmes and policies and added that the policy instrument is available to governments for the creation of employment.

“Employment impact studies are comparative project-based studies of labour-based versus equipment-based infrastructure projects and are also used to analyse and simulate actual and potential impact of public investment programmes on job creation,” Mr. Miller elaborated.

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**ASSESSING A LABOUR-INTENSIVE PROJECT IN BENIN**

In assessing a labour-intensive project in Benin, Mr. Faure Adda told delegates attending the afternoon session that the project had benefited the people immensely in terms of revenue.

**EASTERN CAPE STILL GRAPPLING WITH UNEMPLOYMENT**

A socio-impact assessment study conducted at an EPWP learnership programme in Tlokwe in the Eastern Cape, South Africa indicated under-development and a lack of employment opportunities. Another finding of the study was that a labour rotation system would allow for the employment of approximately 46% of the economically active population.

According to Margaret Mandlane of Sesimba Services, Rapid Rural Appraisal findings are that a large portion of the population is living below the poverty line. Local business is dominated by the service sector and that only one out of four villagers receive piped water.

As a way forward, Mandlane recommended that the EPWP should tap into the high level of agricultural practice to empower the community’s livelihoods apply the labour rotation system and intensify labour-based projects so as to address the second economy in the area.

**POVERTY ERADICATION STRATEGY IN UGANDA**

The Uganda Ministry of Works and Transport promotes labour-intensive methods through its Poverty Eradication Action Strategy against 80% of the country’s population depending on the environment and natural resources for survival - this according to Mr. Elizabeth Senuma, Senior Environment Officer in the Ministry. She says in support of this initiative the Ministry has over the years intensified labour-intensive methods particularly in road works in selected districts. One policy strengthening this commitment is the District, Urban and Community Access Roads (DUCAR) Strategy, 2003 which has proven to be highly successful.

The strategy, Senuma said, stipulates that within five years rehabilitation and periodic maintenance of district roads using labour-based methods should reach 60% target, 35% for urban roads and 100% for routine maintenance. Maintenance of all community access roads would also be labour-intensive.

DUCAR is further guided by other policies pertaining to gender, disability, HIV/AIDS, occupational health and safety,
WEATHER DOES NOT DAMPEN POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS

Despite Durban and surrounds being known for its humid, sunny conditions, local and international Ministers taken on two site visits yesterday did so with umbrellas in hand. The dire weather, however, did not dampen the spirit of the day.

The Ministerial delegation paid a visit to a road construction project in Sycamore Township, Kwa Mabuku. This project is one of the largest in the area and forms part of the R688 million budget allocated to labour-intensive construction over a six-year period, i.e. 2005-2009. The project has employed around 2 694 people in the area as part of the South African government’s Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). The completed section spans 5 km and R13.3 million has already been invested in this project.

Approximately 60% of the workforce is female, which is in line with Government’s goal of empowering women in peri-urban and rural areas.

The key purpose of the project is to improve infrastructure in the area, simultaneously providing skills development and employment opportunities to historically disadvantaged people. Due to the construction of the road, local communities within the road reserve had to be relocated to make way for the project.

The Department of Transport provided new housing and approximately 1 000 people have already moved into their new homes, with a further 654 families relocating by December 2007.

On arrival at the Hibiscus Coast Municipality in Port Shepstone, Ministers were greeted by cheerful men and women, all beneficiaries of the Sizwezeka ("doing it for ourselves") project clad in their orange EPWP uniforms.

Through Sizwezeka, launched in April of this year, individuals living below the poverty line benefit from keeping their environment clean and in exchange receive fruits, vegetables and grocery hampers twice a month.

“We clean our community and we get food in return,” Ms Nomusa Mzoyi from Bhobhoyi told the Ministers. According to Hibiscus Coast Municipal Manager, Mr Slabnot Mayende, the project is still in its pilot phase, but has already contributed vastly to the morale of local communities.”
Prioritizing Employment Creation in Government Policies and Investments in Infrastructure Programmes


1. We, the Ministers of Public Works and Labour meeting at the 12th Regional Seminar for Labour-Intensive Construction held on 08-12 October 2007 in Durban, South Africa;
2. Reflecting on the recommendations from the 11th Regional Seminar held in Mombasa, Kenya, in October 2005;
3. Recalling the global commitment made under the United Nations Millennium Development Goal 1 (MDG 1) to halve extreme poverty by 2015;
4. Recalling the commitments made by the African Heads of States at their third Extra Ordinary Session on Employment and Poverty Alleviation held on 8-9 September 2004 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso;
5. Concerned that unemployment and underemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa is the highest in the world and is threatening the development of our respective countries and the region in general;
6. Acknowledging the commitments we all made nationally in our respective national development plans, regionally and globally to reduce poverty through the provision of essential infrastructure and service delivery;
7. Noting with appreciation the efforts and achievements regionally in countries such as Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe in making infrastructure and service delivery employment friendly;
8. Recognising that equal access to employment is a basic human right and gives dignity to individuals and communities, and that it is key to social cohesion, economic and political stability;
9. Acknowledging that public and private sector investments in infrastructure and service delivery in both rural and urban settings are on the increase;
10. Having deliberated on employment creation in government policies and investment in infrastructure programmes at the 12th Regional Seminar on Labour Intensive Practices in Durban, South Africa;
11. Appreciating the exchange of knowledge and experience on employment intensive approaches to infrastructure;
12. Carefully analysing the achievements made by the South African government’s national Expanded Public Works Programmes and other similar programmes across the continent and beyond, established to create employment opportunities and skills development through the provision of essential infrastructure and basic services;
13. Recognising the technical advisory support provided by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) towards placing employment at the centre of economic and social policies and towards operationalising these policies;
14. HAVING UNDERTAKEN a critical review and discussion of the potential of infrastructure and service delivery in creating decent productive employment opportunities for the unemployed, its impact in the reduction of poverty and contribution to social cohesion, social and political stability;

COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

1. Develop a policy framework that supports the increased and wider utilization of locally available resources in the delivery and maintenance of infrastructure and services;
2. Promote the multi-sectoral application of employment intensive approaches covering environment, social infrastructure, service delivery, tourism and all other sectors where it will be found appropriate and cost-effective;
3. Develop tools and methodologies for employment impact assessments to support the allocation of resources in investment plans and budgets, including recurrent and capital budget, to interventions that have high potential for the creation of employment opportunities;
4. Put in place strategies that encourage government departments to create employment opportunities in different sectors for an efficient delivery without compromising quality or cost of the asset;
5. Put in place appropriate planning, designing and implementation tools and systems and institutional mechanisms that favour the application of locally available resources where appropriate and competitive and appropriate;
6. Improve and encourage the participation of emerging local entrepreneurs that promote the use of local resources through the provision of access to skills, resources and work;
7. Empower beneficiary target groups through their participation in identification, planning, designing and implementation of infrastructure and services that will have high impact on improving their lives;
8. Put in place monitoring mechanisms that measure, evaluate and document the achievements made in creating employment opportunities, skills development and business opportunities using investments made in infrastructure delivery, and;
9. Reaffirm the commitments made by the African Heads of States at their third Extra Ordinary Session on Employment and Poverty Alleviation held on 8-9 September, 2004 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Call upon the ILO to continue to provide technical advisory support on the harmonization of approaches on optimizing the employment potential of public investment in infrastructure and to strengthen knowledge management and sharing for increased and efficient application of employment-intensive approaches, and on linking up with the African Employment Network and others.

09 October 2007
Durban, South Africa.
Farewell function

for Dignitaries at Durban Hilton Hotel

The 12th Regional Seminar on Labour Intensive Practices this year saw an increased involvement by political leaders from the SADC region. Despite being exhausted after a day filled with activities, the VIPs still managed to look their best for an evening function hosted in their honour.

Ministers and MECs who attended this year’s seminar are listed below:

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DESIGNATION</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ms Thoko Didiza</td>
<td>Minister of Public Works</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>2. Mr Tsele Chakela</td>
<td>Minister of Public Works and Transport</td>
<td>Lesotho</td>
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<td>3. Dr Ignatius Chombo</td>
<td>Minister of Local Government Public Works and Urban Development</td>
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<td>4. Mr Sipayo Yengoro</td>
<td>Minister of Public Service Information</td>
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<td>5. Mr Arminio Kopingo</td>
<td>Deputy Minister of Public Works</td>
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<td>6. Mr Henry Amon Robin Musa</td>
<td>Minister of Transport, Public Works and Housing</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
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<td>7. Mr Gabriel Masimbe</td>
<td>Vice Minister of Public Works and Housing</td>
<td>Mozambique</td>
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<td>8. Mr Alphus Ncube</td>
<td>Minister of Labour and Social Welfare</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
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<td>9. Mr Kapembwa Simba</td>
<td>Minister of Works and Supply</td>
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<td>11. Ms Rosina Semenya</td>
<td>MEC Limpopo</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>12. Mr Christian Martin</td>
<td>MEC Eastern Cape</td>
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<td>13. Ms Lydia Johnson</td>
<td>MEC KZN (Public Works)</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>14. Mr Makalala Masuku</td>
<td>MEC Mpumalanga</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>15. Mr Bheki Cele</td>
<td>MEC KZN (Transport, Safety &amp; Liaison)</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>16. Ms Zunzi Amni- Makheha</td>
<td>Director ILO</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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KwaZulu-Natal
World-class tourist destination

Durban is Africa's largest and busiest port. The harbour brings deep-sea shipping and a marine atmosphere right to the heart of the city, creating all kinds of attractions for tourists—wharfside restaurants, maritime museum, sight-seeing boat trips and the general fascination of watching a busy port at work.

Durban's maritime character is captured in spectacular fashion at Umhlanga Marine World, an aquarium and theme park that is built around the recreation of a wrecked freighter of the 1940s era and combines sophisticated shopping and restaurant facilities with state of the art underwater-viewing of marine life.

The aquarium is the world's fifth largest by volume of water, and not only does it cater for tourists and school groups, it has an important role in science as well. It is headquarters of the Oceanographic Research Institute.

The arrangement of tanks has the viewer transported virtually into a world of deep-sea life where fish of all types, rays and sharks glide by the other side of thick glass in authentic conditions, and where sea snakes, devilfish and frostfish can be watched from close up in all their menacing beauty.

Part of the display features sections of the wrecked freighter that have been colonized by marine animals. There is something unbearably poignant about the SOS in Morse code that still issues from a radio operator's cabin in which small reef fish swim in and out of the open drawers of a wooden desk.

In one of the restaurants it is possible to have a seafood meal while sharks look on from nearby.

Umhlanga Marine World also features a penguin colony and a spectacular seal and dolphin show where these engaging marine mammals delight the crowds with their acrobatics and sense of fun.

Elsewhere in the harbour area, Wilson's Wharf provides a range of restaurants and bars, while boat tours of the harbour or out into the open sea can be arranged to experience the full salty atmosphere of wharfside Durban.

Umhlanga Marine World has been developed as a world-class entertainment and tourism destination, complementing the other harbour attractions.

Contacts details:
Umhlanga Marine World: 031-3378999
Boat cruises: 031-3054022, 031-3052894

Railway tourism in KwaZulu-Natal

Visitors to KwaZulu-Natal are offered the experience of travelling on steam trains in the picturesque southern districts of the province, immortalised by Alan Paton in his novel, Cry, the Beloved Country.

Durban is the entry point to a range of eco-tourism and other attractions in KwaZulu-Natal, most of them no more than three hours' drive from the city, much of it through scenic countryside.

Attractions range from the high Drakensberg mountains which are often snowbound - to the lush, rolling Midlands, to the glorious beaches, to pristine wilderness that is home to the Big Five (Bull, Lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo).

The Big Five are on offer in various parts of southern Africa. However, it is only in KwaZulu-Natal that the Big Six are on offer. In the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park, these two hours' drive from Durban, visitors are able to view the largest land mammal - the elephant - and the largest marine mammal - the whale.

Whales migrate northward from the Antarctic to mate and feed in the warm waters of southern Madagascar. As they migrate, they spend a significant amount of time in the deep waters off St Lucia. The provides the opportunity to view these magnificent creatures as they blow, break surface and play. Sometimes they are alone, sometimes in groups of as many as a dozen. School of dolphins leaping from the water are often a bonus.

More whales are spotted by boat off St Lucia - which has a large marine reserve as well as its onboard game reserve - than anywhere else in South Africa.

Advance Charters, a licensed operator based at St Lucia offers regular whale watching tours between July and November, also providing game house accommodation. The spotter boat launches through the surf three times a day during this period, which is a thrill in itself.

As a Bonaire operated, Advance is permitted to bring whale watchers as close as 300 metres to any whale, providing great viewing and excellent opportunities for photographs and video.

Greater St Lucia Wetland Park is a World Heritage Site with a wide range of dryland, wetland, estuarine and marine habitats. It has been identified as a prime node for the further development of KwaZulu-Natal's tourism industry.

Whale watching as an alternative to elephant-watching makes it unique in the world.

Contact details: 035-950427