

Introducing the Eastern Cape Economic Development and Environmental Affairs

The Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA) is committed to improving the lives of all its citizens, with the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP) as the key driver in socio-economic transformation in the Eastern Cape.

DEDEA's role in this front is to promote sustainable and shared economic growth and development through carefully selected programmes designed to facilitate enterprise development.

To make a meaningful progress in enterprise development, DEDEA has embarked in the process of reviewing its role in supporting enterprises Small, Medium and Micro (SMME) through developing a co-operative strategy. This strategy seeks to create more opportunities for the enterprises in the province.

"The role of investment promotion in growing investor confidence to promote sustainable enterprises, encouraging trade and investment and improving the effectiveness of interventions aimed at the second economy is taking shape in the province. DEDEA as the principal driver in spearheading economic development initiatives is seeking to further boost and sustain this positive outlook through fully integrating all relevant role players in the province," says Mbulelo Jolingana, Senior Manager: Enterprise Development at DEDEA.

These positive strides point not only to a healthy provincial economy, but also signal sound policies and successful developmental initiatives being implemented by the DEDEA towards attaining a rapid annual performance and annual economic growth rate of between 5% and 8%, and of halving unemployment by 2014.

The DEDEA implements its strategies and policies in partnership with various Public Entities through mapping out a course for sustained success activities across various sectors. This is done through identifying various viable business propositions which entail agriculture and agro - processing, general manufacturing, automotives and energy, tourism and cultural industries, aquaculture, fisheries and environmental management, agriculture, business financing, real services and business services sector among others.

The Eastern Cape has sustained its growth momentum of previous years, recording an impressive 5.2% growth rate for 2006/07. In addition, Statistics South Africa reports that the province's Gross Domestic Product by region grew by 5.3% during the last quarter of 2007, driven largely by impressive growth in the manufacturing sector (up by 5.7% compared to 3.3% in 2005/6) and the finance, real estate and business services sector (up by 8.5% compared to 5.1% in 2005/6).

This recorded performance brings pride and clearly showcase that the initiatives and measures implemented by the department are yielding considerable results, and contribute in ensuring that the province is steering to the positive direction to achieving its economic goals and targets.

DEDEA's role in Enterprise Development

The DEDEA, by means of the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) is facilitating various projects with a budget allocation of **R XX million** from the current financial year. The role of DEDEA is to approve the business plans and

ensure that the approved projects play a significant role in facilitating enterprise development in the province. Monitoring and evaluation is also key in addressing the challenges faced by the projects and identify opportunities to ensure sustainability.

This ECDC plays a pivotal role in curtailing the process of funding business ventures through providing a valuable and necessary support for poised economic growth in the region.

The ECDC has been instrumental in allocating funding for erecting enabling infrastructure and ensuring viability of the provincial Industrial Development Zones which seek to translate and implement projects to address the PGDP and other interventions geared towards fuelling the economic performance of the province. Our challenge over the next few years is to ensure that this growth is maintained, that it translates into sustainable job creation and that the benefits of prudent fiscal and economic policies filter through to all communities throughout the province.

Other Economic Development Partners

A collaborative approach has been made by the department with government institutions that have programmes geared to facilitate SME development.

These institutions include:

- The Business Referral and Information Network
- SEDA
- Department of Trade and Industry
- The Centre for Intellectual Property and Registrations Office
- KHULA
- COMSEC
- Business chambers.

These institutions are committed to providing knowledge and expertise in business development delivered by using sophisticated solutions and best practice. These institutions have a track record in assisting emerging businesses to access business development services through a network of accredited service providers. Utilisation of such services contributes in improving performance and quality service or product offering for businesses.