

Honourable Speaker

Honourable Members of the Provincial Cabinet

Honourable Mayor of Cape Town

Honourable Leader of the Opposition

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Honourable leaders of political parties, members of the National Assembly and National Council of Provinces

Honourable members of the Provincial Legislature

Director General of the Western Cape

Heads of Provincial Departments

Leaders of Local government

Religious leaders

Community leaders

Colleagues and friends and

Most important: all citizens of the Western Cape

Speaker, this is my 10th State of the Province address, and the launch of the Provincial Legislature's annual calendar. It requires that I, on behalf of the provincial government, account to the residents of the Western Cape, for the progress we have made, and the challenges we face.

All of us on this side of the House are profoundly aware of the responsibility the citizens have conferred on us. We take this duty very seriously.

For any government, at any level, to create conditions for sustained progress towards prosperity for all, requires three pre-conditions: The Rule of Law; a culture of accountability, (in which all members of society take their responsibilities seriously), and a capable state that undertakes its duties efficiently, honestly, and cost-effectively.

We are half-way through our second term in office. Today I will give a progress report of our work thus far, work that I hope will continue when I am no longer in this position. Our team is building unstoppable momentum towards a highly skilled, innovation driven, resource efficient, connected, high opportunity society for all.

Last year I dedicated this government's second term to the young people of this Province.

And I made it clear that our overriding goal is the economic inclusion of all. Mastering skills, getting a job, earning a salary, and climbing a career ladder through hard work and life-long learning is the only recipe for sustainable economic liberation for all. Putting our young people on this path must be our number one objective in South Africa. It certainly is in this province. Individuals have as much responsibility as families. And families, the core unit of a functional society, must fulfil their responsibilities just as much as the government. We can only achieve our goals if we work together.

Since we took office in 2009, we have put this Province firmly on the road to the future. And today we assess where we are on that journey.

Good governance starts a domino effect. After years of effort, by many partners, the Western Cape is beginning to reap the rewards.

Let me begin by thanking my cabinet colleagues and the professionals in this administration, under the leadership of the Director General, Brent Gerber, for their contributions every day towards fulfilling the voters' mandate. They understand the meaning of the voters' mandate and the role of a professional civil service. This is an opportunity for me to express our gratitude on behalf of everyone in this province.

Not only have we achieved a full set of financially unqualified audits, and 11 out of 12 clean departmental audits, we have also been top of the Presidency's Monitoring and Evaluation unit's ratings for 5 years running.

Good governance helps us create a context for the most important priority of all -- job creation, which is driven primarily by private sector investment, which is attracted by good governance and public confidence in the future. As I said, it is a domino effect.

Our unemployment Rate is the lowest in SA on the broad definition, which is I believe, the measure that should be used because it includes unemployed people who have given up looking for work. Our broad unemployment rate is a full 8.2 percentage points lower than Gauteng, and a full 13.8 points lower than the national figure.

The latest Quarterly Labour Force Survey figures for the 4th Quarter 2016 show that this province has gained 490 000 new jobs since the 4th quarter of 2009, the year we took office.

Western Cape also has the lowest rural unemployment rate in the country, at just 14%, which is the lowest recorded since this measure was instituted. This is a significant statistic for us because it shows that our focused economic growth plan, Project Khulisa, is starting to make an impact. We made our decision on which sectors to focus on for Khulisa based on potential for:

- jobs impact in rural areas,**
- jobs for young people, and**
- jobs for people with low skills levels**

We settled on Agri-processing, Tourism and the Energy economy – sectors not merely confined to urban growth, but with potential impact in rural areas, and this is contributing to the falling rural unemployment rate.

These are all encouraging achievements in the context of a national economic growth rate that has dropped to just 0.4% according to the South African Reserve Bank.

We've managed to keep business confidence 10 points higher than the national average - and 11 and 12 points higher than Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal respectively.

The massive switch in business confidence to the Western Cape represents a significant shift in sentiment since the 1990s when business confidence was traditionally higher in Gauteng.

Another important indicator of economic progress is the growth in building plan approvals. It reflects confidence and movement in the economy.

While the growth in value of buildings completed at the national level declined by 6% in 2015, the value in the Western Cape has grown by 27%. And this is not just in our central business districts.

The value of buildings completed in Khayelitsha/Mitchells Plain has increased substantially since 2007 from R115 million to almost R961 million.

And amazingly, 56% of all bonds registered by residents of Gauteng during the past year were for properties in the Western Cape. People, rich and poor, only migrate voluntarily to places that they believe offer them better prospects, and this starts with good governance. We regard these statistics as a vote of confidence in this province.

The market is responding to the growing demands and challenges in all sectors, and in the process creating jobs, which people so desperately need.

The growing demand for homes in the province is reflected in the number of building plan approvals, with the Western Cape's share of the number of buildings completed nationally at well above 30%. The building sector is a component of economic growth, and the downstream secondary jobs are significant. The construction sector employs more than 160,000 people in the province and directly contributes R30bn to the provincial economy.

And of course, when a person has a job, they purchase goods and services, which creates even more jobs. This is called a virtuous cycle, and after years of paving the way, cutting red tape, and encouraging entrepreneurship, we are now beginning to see the results.

I have little doubt that the new Metro administrations in various parts of the country will make similar progress, as the first crucial step to economic liberation in other provinces. It is hard, long, dotted with deep political pot-holes. We hope the progress we are making inspires you to persevere.

Since the start of this term, we have secured over R5.9 billion worth of investments for the Western Cape, through our excellent economic development and investment agency, Wesgro. This resulted in 1 865 new jobs from 2014 to 2016.

We have also closed a total of 25 trade deals to the value of R8.6 billion since 2014, creating 662 new jobs.

Our focus going forward will be on increasing the Rand value of our exports, generating maximum job creation potential from export orders, and supporting Western Cape companies who have the ability to expand into the rest of Africa.

The African expansion programme is forging ahead, with Wesgro committing to R501 million in deals to date.

We will apply the experience of the last two years to make further progress on our continent. Since 2014 Wesgro has helped over 1 470 Western Cape companies to export their goods to global and African markets, accompanied 9398 exporters on trade missions, and mentored 1070 companies through the Export Development Programme (EDP).

We are preparing to ramp up efforts to boost investment into our region through the launch of the Cape Investor Centre later this year. This will serve as a “one stop shop” for investors, enabling them to complete local, provincial and national regulatory processes in a single location, under the professional guidance of a single relationship manager.

The investor centre follows the approach of our Red Tape Unit, now in its seventh year of operation. The unit continues to maintain an 85% resolution success rate in solving the 6000 cases of red tape blockages it has dealt with.

We are looking to unlock R1 billion in red tape savings by 2019, with a provisional estimate of R600 million in savings or benefits to date. Cabinet has further resolved that Regulatory Impact Assessments must be done for new legislation and significant policies, so that we do not unintentionally create new red tape barriers that stifle growth.

Red tape can be especially harmful for small enterprises. Since taking office, we have refined a support system for entrepreneurs, with 35 000 small businesses supported since 2009.

Our SMME Contract Finance Fund facilitates loans to SMME's that require more capacity to secure larger business contracts.

A total of 164 SMME's have been assisted since 2014, with loan transactions worth almost R13 million.

The second funding vehicle is the Enterprise Development Fund, which has supported 300 SMME's in 3 years. The fund was created in 2012 and includes grant and loan fund mechanisms for SMME's.

An amount of R62 million has been invested in small businesses to date, through a 40/60 Loan Finance partnership between our Economic Development Department and the National Empowerment Fund. The funding is available to small business in the form of a low cost loan.

During research for this speech, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that a full 75% of all venture capital deals concluded in South Africa, happen right here in the Western Cape.

This is primarily through the innovation generated through Tech Start-ups.

One of the reasons cited by the PWC Emerging Company Survey indicates that there are more small business development and innovation programmes in the province compared to elsewhere in the country.

This is partly because we do whatever we can to support small business, by linking them with funders willing to back their ideas, by hosting the annual Western Cape Funding Fair, to bring funders and entrepreneurs together.

An extension of this funding fair, is the Investment Readiness Programme which takes the fair through the West Coast, Winelands, Eden, Central Karoo and Overberg regions. Major funders partner us for this roadshow, which has managed to secure over R7 million in funding linkages to rural business in the first year of operation.

Honourable Speaker, I have already mentioned our focused economic growth plan, Project Khulisa which helps create conducive conditions for growth in key job-creating sectors of the economy : Agri-processing, Tourism, and the Energy Economy, with a particular focus on Oil and Gas.

The results are profoundly encouraging.

Employment has increased by 40% in the Agriculture and Agri-processing sectors over the past two years through the creation of over 127 400 new jobs.

A major focus of the Khulisa agri-processing team is the development of the China and Angola markets for our region's export wines. China represents a potential market of 38 million people who drink imported wine twice a year, and Angola is the largest destination for wine exporters in Africa.

Our remarkable successes in Agriculture and Agri-processing are a testimony to human ingenuity, as we are not blessed with particularly fertile soils or abundant water. Those natural assets lie on the Eastern seaboard of our country.

Here we have water shortages constituting a major crisis. We are working on expanding the storage capacity of the Brandvlei dam, so that an additional 4400 hectares can be irrigated, with the potential of creating upward of 8000 new rural jobs.

Our Tourism sector continues to show remarkable potential. International arrivals are up by almost 16% year-on-year, and we passed the 10 million passengers mark through Cape Town International airport last year.

Guided by Wesgro, we've generated an additional R3 billion for the economy by adding over half a million new 2-way direct seats through our Cape Air Access Initiative. This has been a remarkable success and is a strategy necessitated in part by SAA's ill-fated decision to suspend direct international flights to Cape Town. Other airlines saw the gap, and the rest is history.

The launch of an expanded Cape Town International Convention Centre this year, will help grow the already booming conference industry, which over the past two years has had an economic impact of over R645 million, measured by the total average delegate spend per day of R3,210.

The Western Cape is now well established as a tourist destination. Our strategy is to develop the niche markets. Plans are well advanced for establishing the Cape as the Cycling capital of Africa. We are also growing Madiba Legacy Tourism, by establishing a Madiba Legacy Route and promoting the region as a Global Food and Wine destination. There are growing markets in these sectors.

In the Oil & Gas economy, we are preparing for the industrialisation of the West Coast to facilitate the growth of a sector with great potential.

The Saldanha Industrial Development Zone, is well on track, its board is established, and memorandums of understanding sealed with 34 potential investors.

The bulk services, waste water treatment and a supply hub for the port are already in place, with a link bridge to the port and water reservoir under construction.

We are working in partnership with the Trade and Industry Department, Saldanha Bay Municipality, the Industrial Development Corporation and the Transnet National Ports Authority. This has really been a co-operative governance venture, just as the World Cup was, and I wish to thank our national and local government partners for the ease of doing business with them on this project.

Western Cape is also home to a growing number of green manufacturers who are driving South Africa's status as the fastest growing green economy hub in the world, according to a report by Moody's Ratings Agency.

Four recent investments worth R1.1 billion in alternative waste treatment projects have created 148 jobs and advanced the technical capacity of the sector. We launched the R500 million New Horizons Energy plant in Athlone last month. This is the first plant in

Africa to turn municipal solid waste into biogas, reducing the need of land for land-fill sites, producing energy and fertiliser, and above all, creating jobs.

Greencape, our special purpose vehicle for the green economy, was awarded the Chairman's Award for Exceptional Service by the Institute of Waste management of Southern Africa. Congratulations to that great team.

As we analyse the growth projections of our priority economic sectors, we have concluded that we do not have enough of the skills required to fill the jobs that we anticipate.

Our answer is the Apprenticeships Game Changer, which aims to ensure that young people have the necessary skills for jobs in the sectors where demand is growing.

We have set a target of introducing 32 500 apprentices into the labour market by 2019 to meet the needs of a growing province.

Between April and September 2016, 3 009 young people completed their work-based programmes, in fields linked to the Tourism, Oil and Gas and Agri-processing sectors.

We aim to dramatically up-scale the supply of skilled artisans by working with relevant Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA's), employers, learners and their parents.

This year our priorities are:

- **Intensifying Maths support in the province's 23 Technical High Schools and 50 other schools**
- **Enhancing public awareness of the Technical and vocational career path through TVET colleges**
- **Engaging employers about taking on learners for workplace based learning programmes such as apprenticeships**
- **We are also working with SETA's on an innovative dual system apprenticeship programme for Solar PV Installers.**

This project is the initiator of what we hope to achieve: a full dual apprenticeship system, where learners have both theoretical and workplace training at the same time.

This formula has proved itself in driving economic growth and boosting youth employment worldwide, and will be a gamechanger if we manage to institute it in South Africa.

If we want our economy to grow, we have to ensure energy security. We have learnt over the past decade that our country is overly reliant on the state monopoly called Eskom.

This brings me to our energy game-changer, on which we are working jointly with the City of Cape Town.

South Africa's energy crisis requires a sustainable, low carbon and diverse energy-mix. Technological advances are enabling the Western Cape to pioneer the trend towards small, distributed suppliers of renewable energy, with flexibility and low costs.

Our target is to enable independent generation of 135MW through Solar Panel (PV) installations by 2020. We are well on our way.

Current trends show a marked uptake of Rooftop PV, with 120% growth in approved installations in the Cape metro from May to December 2016.

To date, 32MW in Rooftop PV capacity and 65 000 efficient water heaters have been installed in the province. This is significant progress on the 10MW installed capacity this time last year.

Given the consistent focus on Rooftop PV, we think it is feasible to double the current installed capacity over the next year.

We've helped 15 municipalities to meet the requirements for legal installations of Rooftop PV, with Nersa approved tariffs. This is a marked increase from just two this time last year and we have a target of 20 municipalities in the next year.

This system enables households and businesses to feed their solar generated power into the municipal grids and get compensated for it.

That is why people who switch to Solar PV must please remain on the grid. it generates income for them, and helps secure an energy supply for the economy. Installations also need to be legally compliant for safety reasons, and hence we are appealing to Western Cape residents to do the right thing and get approval for their PV systems.

We will continue supporting Municipalities to develop long-term plans for integrating metering & financial systems in order to accommodate solar energy feed-ins to the grid. The City of Cape Town has been pioneering in this regard.

This month we are launching our Rooftop PV Campaign to encourage businesses to switch to solar, stay on the grid, and save on their electricity bill.

PV installation prices are currently dropping significantly, by 21 – 45%, and the cost of coal generated power is increasing. There's never been a better time to switch and save. This is a pay-off line that means exactly what it says.

For our part, we are installing PV in 5 WCG buildings, preparing an energy services tender for our health facilities and other buildings, and negotiating green leases with the property owners of our rented buildings

We've also engaged National Treasury and the Energy Department numerous times on the business case for direct power procurement.

We believe that allowing municipalities to enter into contracts with independent power producers is a four-fold win: cheaper electricity prices, lower carbon emissions, more investment and more industrialisation. This ultimately means more local jobs. The City of Cape Town is pushing hard for the right to do this.

Unfortunately, we have had no meaningful response to date from the DoE, and we are concerned that they may well be trying to defend Eskom's monopoly. Mayor De Lille has been clear about her plans to pursue the City's legal options in this regard, and we will support her.

Honourable Speaker, the current respite from load-shedding must not make us complacent. Growing the economy at the rate required to create jobs, will test our country's current capacity to the limits, and expose our over-reliance on a state monopoly. We have to change this.

A further economic threat to our region, one that is ever-present at this time of year, are the thousands of fires that break out all over our hot, dry province.

Ten years ago, we were astounded that we had 12 000 fires in one year. It was an almost unmanageable number. Now, more than 17 000 fires have already been recorded this fire season.

It is impossible to establish with any certainty the cause of most of these fires, but we know that a great many have to do with human agency, whether by accident or ill intent.

All allegations of criminality are referred to the relevant authorities to investigate.

We will support the relevant authorities to use the full force of the law to track down and deal with any alleged arsonists who endanger the lives and livelihoods of so many.

I believe that throwing cigarette butts out of car windows should also constitute attempted arson. With our winds, it merely takes a spark to land on a patch of dry grass, and become a raging inferno.

Members of the public can assist by phoning 10177 when they spot an early-stage fire. A quick response is the best way to contain the blaze. But hoax calls and panicky false alarms, create enormous problems. Members of the public should help, not hinder, our emergency services.

For our part, we have massively grown the province's fire-fighting resources.

This year the Department commissioned 10 purpose-built firefighting vehicles, which will be deployed to rural municipalities across the Province. This is a huge boost to rural areas where to date the firefighting capacity was severely limited. This initiative forms part of a 3-year project to invest R37-million in the province's firefighting capacity.

Since 2012 we've gone from 8 to 26 fire-fighting aircraft operating across 31 runways.

These resources have meant that, for 5 years running now, 97% of fires could be brought under control within the first hour of being reported.

We are also running an innovative Smoke alarm project, aimed at saving lives through early fire warnings in informal settlements. Our pilot programme in the Breede Valley has been very successful. A second pilot will see the entire community of Wallacedene receiving smoke alarms. We will be evaluating the efficacy of this programme carefully.

Western Cape residents owe a great debt of gratitude to our fire-fighters. They are truly world class, and deserve their hero status in the public mind. So on behalf of all citizens, thank you to all the firefighters, professionals from all five District Municipalities, Local Municipalities and City of Cape Town, the staff from Cape Nature, SANPARKS and the Working-on-Fire Program.

A major role is also played by the members of the Fire Protection Associations, Volunteer Wildfire Services and private contractor teams. Pilots from the South African Air Force and the private sector also contributed greatly, as did the South African Defence Force Joint Operations Centre, and the National Disaster Management Centre.

It is my pleasure to welcome as a guest here today:

Reinard Geldenhuys from Overstrand. Reinard is rated by his colleagues as probably the best wildland fire officer in the country. He has commanded major fire operations during the past few years including the Houwhoek fire last year, and the Grabouw fires this season. Together with Etienne du Toit he is responsible for leading the entire provincial planning for the fire season each year. He was part of the team that drafted and established the Western Cape Incident Command System which we use to manage the 17 000 fires so far this year. He also serves as the base manager for the Struisbaai NSRI station, which he fits into his busy programme. If anyone is deserving of this recognition and to represent the firefighters of the Western Cape, it is Reinard. Thank you sir.

Honourable Speaker, we live in a water scarce province and country, which is a further threat to economic progress.

A study we've already completed indicates provincial water demands will exceed the current supply in 2019.

We are currently have level 3B water restrictions in the Cape Metro. The latest Dam Levels are at an average 34.8 %. Last year at this time we were on 44%.

Going forward there are some key interventions to address water shortages in our region that are being engaged by all levels of government. These are:

- **The Berg River-Voëlvlei augmentation scheme which amounts to diverting surplus winter water into the Voëlvlei Dam, maximizing the storing capacity of winter rain**
- **Fast-tracking the development of the Table Mountain Group Aquifer, the underground water table stretching from the peninsula all the way to areas including Knysna and Oudtshoorn.**
- **Water re-use - in other words, waste water treatment on a macro scale; and**
- **Desalination - this sounds an obvious solution, but its real challenge is cost. It could cost a minimum capital amount of R15 billion for a desalination plant for Cape Town with operational costs potentially running between R350 million and R1 billion per year. This would translate into very expensive water. There are encouraging signs that new technologies can provide a cheaper solution.**

We will soon be launching our H2O Heroes Campaign to acknowledge your efforts and ask you to do more. Every person can personally save hundreds of litres of a month by refraining from long Showers, using bath water to irrigate gardens, and driving around in a dusty car. In a drought a dusty car is a status symbol.

We are doing everything we can to generate water savings in our government buildings through our Public Works Department. This includes water meter installations in CBD buildings, changes to air-conditioning systems, and internal staff communication amongst other interventions.

The agriculture sector is a major water user that is vulnerable to climate change. Climate projections for the region indicate continued warming of 1.5 °C to 3 °C across the province by 2050, with some moderation along coastal areas. It calls for a concerted response.

Our Smart-Agri plan was launched in May 2016 by a broad coalition of stakeholders to increase climate-smart production, reduce the risk of disasters, facilitate planning across the sector, and share climate change data.

This involves innovation, and I want to share one amazing example.

Through our online platform, called Fruitlook, we have established a digital means of optimising the water usage of the entire agricultural sector.

We have mapped 5.7 million hectares of farmland, including the entire fruit producing area of 220 000 ha from Vredendal in the West to Montagu/Bonnievale in the East and De Doorns in the North.

Right down to the level of an individual field, farmers no longer have to estimate how much water their crops need.

They can access accurate information on the water needs of their crops, field by field, at any given time through our app.

Using only satellite and weather data, we tell farmers how much water their crop used in the previous week, whether the crops experienced any water deficiencies and the actual biomass produced.

In total, Fruitlook offers farmers 9 types of information on their crop growth, from a vegetation index showing how vigorously the crop is growing, to a leaf area index showing the size of leaves versus the amount of visible soil.

The Fruitlook service is funded by us and free to farmers, and training sessions at our Elsenburg headquarters are fully booked. The number of crop fields we are helping farmers to monitor has grown by 450% in the 5 years, from just under 20 000 ha in 2012, to an estimated 90 000 ha this year.

There are so many examples of smart Agri that it is impossible to keep up. The industry is being revolutionised.

We are also leading the way on an innovative farming method to beat the drought – called conservation farming.

At our *Langgewens Research Farm* in the Swartland we are currently producing nearly double the amount of wheat on less than half of the area previously planted, despite the drought conditions.

A recent study on the impact of this research project has shown that 98.8% of farmers in Swartland have begun implementing this methodology which involves enhancing the nutrient content of soil, by making seasonal changes to the type of crop you plant in a particular spot. For example, our research has established that wheat yields rise significantly when crops are planted on a land where canola or lupin was grown the previous season.

The drought also has a serious impact on animal production in the West Coast and Central Karoo districts, with many farmers having to sell their animals while struggling to feed their core herds.

Provincially our agriculture department has completely reprioritised its budget, making R48.1 million available for drought relief in the last 2 years.

Of this money, R35.9 million went straight to 564 small-holder farmers in the form of fodder, supplementing the monthly livelihoods of agri-workers, and compensating for crop losses.

We are committed to supporting emerging farmers in the Western Cape, and we have implemented land reform more successfully than anywhere else.

Our success can be attributed in part to our farmer support strategy over the last 8 years, called the commodity approach.

It is based on partnerships with commercial agriculture to create opportunities for emerging farmers to access markets and mentorship. We believe we have refined a unique formula.

In the Western Cape, we encourage commercial farmers, who have existing contracts for the supply of commodities, to partner with emerging farmers capable of supplying a portion of the overall contract value. In this way, emerging black farmers are able to access local and external markets, growing their agri-businesses with the support of established farmers. We are grateful to all those who have supported this initiative with such good results.

We are also there every step of the way through our agriculture department's extension and advisory services, recognized by the global Food and Agriculture Organisation for the innovative ways we support emerging farmers.

Commercial farmers in the Western Cape appreciate the importance of transformation in the agriculture sector. They are bringing resources to the table, in cash and in kind, to support the transformation agenda.

A good example is Hortgro, the national services group for the Deciduous Fruit Industry. They have made R20 million available to support a programme to help black farmers expand their orchards, infrastructure and equipment.

Our provincial agriculture department has contributed R40 million to this plan, and the National Treasury a further R60 million through the Jobs Fund. All told, this represents a R120 million project to boost black fruit farmers over a 4 year period.

Honourable Speaker, our pioneering commodity approach has led to the success of 62% of all land reform farms in the Western Cape. This represents remarkable progress for a high-risk sector with many challenges, not the least of which is the weather.

We know how well we are progressing because we are the only province to commission an external evaluation of all land reform farms within its boundaries.

The evaluation looked at the 246 land reform projects we supported between 2009 and 2013. Success was measured using 6 indicators, including access to markets, updated business plans and job creation on land-reform farms.

Our target going forward is a 70% success rate for land reform projects and this must keep rising.

We have established a Land Reform Advisory Desk and District Land Reform Committees to provide the necessary support.

Since 2014, we have facilitated over R400 million in conditional grant funding to 293 businesses operating on land reform farms. The funding is provided through the national “Comprehensive Agriculture Support Programme”.

When a project is approved for grant funding, through a stringent and fair process, the provincial government’s Implementing Agency then proceeds to facilitate the approved funding for the emerging farmer. We have called this agency CASIDRA, the “Cape Agency for Sustainable Integrated Development in Rural Areas”.

CASIDRA will, for example, procure the required equipment on behalf of an emerging farmer, and then deliver it directly to their farm. We essentially apply a project management approach to help maximise the value of grant funding for emerging farmers.

Honourable Speaker, it is my pleasure today to welcome Jacky Goliath, a shining example and role model for emerging farmers with aspirations of growing their businesses.

Jacky started off with 1,000 fynbos plants based in a Kylemore nursery called “De Fynne”. She then upgraded to 1.5ha in Simondium, and today has moved on to a 22ha prune farm obtained with government assistance.

Her business is now a fully-fledged wholesale nursery specialising in growing water-wise and indigenous plants, as well fruit crops.

Now in their third year of production, De Fynne is a supplier of more than 30 different plant products, including 3 000 plants to Woolworths per week. Next time you walk down the aisles in Woolies, remember the progress we are making on land reform in the Western Cape.

De Fynne has won several awards, with Jacky becoming to the first female ever to win the Toyota New Harvest Award, in 2015.

The support we have provided along the way includes nursery establishment, Infrastructure, mechanization and capacity building. Thanks for being here today Jacky, and for my beautiful posy, exclusively from De Fynne’s booming nursery.

Honourable Speaker, our rural communities rely on a growing agriculture sector for their livelihoods. We are the only province in the country with a dedicated Farm Worker Development programme, which aims to enhance the status and socio-economic conditions of agri workers and their families.

There were a total of 65 development and social upliftment projects since 2014, benefitting 19 778 agri families. Taking into account interventions from other departments, the total number of rural development projects rises to 206 since 2014.

Honourable Speaker, like rural land reform, urban land reform can be a very important empowerment tool.

We are making steady progress on issuing title deeds to housing beneficiaries. There is currently a 59% national backlog in the transfer of ownership to housing subsidy beneficiaries. In the Western Cape we've brought this down to 28%.

In total, we've delivered over 75 300 title deeds to beneficiaries since 2009. During this financial year, we put R41 million behind addressing the backlog, through the Human Settlements Development Grant. A title deed represents a direct transfer of land and wealth. It is a crucial component of land reform.

Our Human Settlements Department has also listed affordable housing as a strategic priority.

This is different from the RDP or BNG house, to use the acronyms which now refer to the transfer of a free house by the state to a beneficiary.

This approach is not sustainable. National policy, which we support, is to increasingly move in the direction of ensuring that people contribute something towards their housing. This of course requires sustained economic growth and jobs as a necessary pre-condition for the focus on Affordable Housing.

This involves a shift to what is called social housing, usually rental stock, which requires tenants to pay rentals, so that the stock of affordable accommodation can be maintained and extended. If people do not pay their rents, this can't happen. The process grinds to a halt. This is also why Social Housing Institutions have been increasingly reluctant to give their approval for new projects.

If people do not pay, social housing institutions have to borrow more from banks and charge more in rent to service their debt. So, given the fact that the country cannot afford to extend free housing indefinitely, and if social housing institutions are not building sufficient rental accommodation, because tenants don't pay rent, the low end of the housing market is in trouble.

Part of this problem can be addressed by the anticipated restructuring of the capital grant system which will increase subsidies for the provision of rental units to R155,000 each (from the current R125,000). This is an enormous individual subsidy from the state and is only sustainable if people pay the modest rentals required of them

News of this development has boosted confidence in the sector.

The total value of potential affordable housing projects in the pipeline now stands at over 40 000 units worth R3.2 billion, across three types of subsidies – FLISP, Social Rental Housing and Institutional Housing, which cater for different market segments.

Honourable Speaker, Affordable Housing projects must be sustainable and replicable with accessibility to jobs. This is what we aim to achieve starting with a gamechanger project in Pinelands, a residential feeder suburb to the inner city of Cape Town, where 22 hectares of land are immediately available. The size of the land is relevant to the project's viability.

We have called this Game Changer the Better Living Model for mixed-income, mixed-use development, and we are implementing it in partnership with the City of Cape Town.

We have calculated that 3,600 residential opportunities can be built on this site.

This will include a mix of affordable housing options to be cross-subsidised by open market properties and retail space.

Besides the provision of much needed well-located affordable housing, this development will catalyse the upgrade of the surrounding roads infrastructure and public transport, as well as introduce new social services to the neighbouring communities.

As we all know, Cape Town does not only have one CBD. Together with the City, we are implementing the Better Living Model in other core nodes, with exciting results.

A total of 3000 units are planned for the Belhar CBD, where a mixed-use high density residential development will create an urban context around nearby education facilities – the University of the Western Cape, Cape Peninsular University of Technology, Northlink College and the provincial government's Oasis School for children with barriers to learning.

The development will include a mix of student accommodation, social rental stock, open market GAP, and bonded properties

The development includes neighbourhood squares, a promenade, an urban green area and retail centre.

We've already delivered 627 of these units in Phase 1. By early 2018 we would've installed the bulk services, and connected them to the remaining 2400 units to be implemented in this project

Honourable Speaker, we are also making progress on a catalytic project to upgrade informal settlements near the airport along the N2, known as the Southern Corridor.

The project will have huge transformative potential for communities for the informal settlement communities of Barcelona, Gxa Gxa, Vukuzenzela, Kanana, Kosovo, Thabo Mbeki, Tsunami, Lusaka, Europe all of which are in the Gugulethu, Nyanga and

Phillippi areas. The priority backyard dwellers in these areas will also benefit from this project.

The installation of bulk and internal services is underway in Forest Village, with development approvals for Ithemba expected this year, and for the remaining areas in 2018.

We have similar catalytic projects in large informal settlements elsewhere in the province. In George, 15 000 units are planned for the area covering Thembaletu, Syferfontein and Wilderness Heights. Construction of top structures for Thembaletu Phase 1 is underway. Phase 2 is already out for tender, with further phases at various stages of planning.

In Paarl, the appointments of all contractors is underway for the Vlakkeland project, with 2556 units planned.

Planning also well under-way on the Trans Hex development in the Breede Valley. The development will yield over 8000 housing opportunities to improve the living conditions of informal dwellers and farm workers.

These catalytic projects, and several others totalling 105 201 housing opportunities, are in the pipeline for completion by 2022.

Honourable Speaker, this is a province that values opportunity for its citizens. There is no greater demonstration of our progress in this regard, than the strides we are making in connecting citizens to each other and the world.

Our Broadband programme, identified as a Game Changer, has delivered high-speed internet services to 1414 sites to date.

The sites include schools, hospitals, emergency centres, clinics, rural libraries, Cape Access centres and government offices.

Full coverage of over 1,900 sites as originally planned, will be completed by April 2017. This is according to the project plan presented to us by our partners, the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) and Neotel.

Since all planned sites will soon be connected, we will embark on a technology refresh phase to upgrade minimum network speeds to 100 megabits/sec.

We thank both SITA and Neotel for their work to date. Few understand the revolution happening right under their noses in the Western Cape, with many schools and other public facilities being connected to the internet every day.

This work is often happening under difficult circumstances, with numerous criminal threats to staff on the ground. We thank them for their perseverance and fortitude, just

as we thank every single person who delivers services anywhere in this province at the risk of their own personal safety.

In 2015 we also announced that we would bring Wi-Fi to every ward in the Western Cape through a plan to deliver 384 Wi-Fi hotspots in the 3 years between 2015 – 2018.

A total of 150 hotspots have been delivered by March 2017, which will take our current numbers of citizens accessing the service to over 70 000. The remaining 234 hotspots will be delivered by early 2018.

At our hotspots, people can receive 250Mb of free data per month and when you have used this allocation, you can buy more at the ridiculous cheap rate of R45 for five Gigs. You can also get unlimited access to government websites, including our education portal.

Of course, I am constantly asked for a roll-out plan for the remaining sites -- but Neotel says they first have to finish the broadband installation and upgrade from 10 to 100 megs, so they have a strong enough backbone to install reliable Wifi services in every ward. They have promised me a full roll-out plan by October this year.

Schools have been prioritised for broadband connection, as part of our eLearning Game Changer

A total of 1239 schools will be connected to our Wide Area broadband network by April 17. according to Neotel and SITA projections.

More than 5 320 Western Cape classrooms are now tech-enabled, exceeding our target of just over 5000.

Our ePortal for learners to access curriculum aligned content now has 5 612 digital resources. All education stakeholders can use it to source resources they find most useful.

We have started to enhance the teaching of maths and languages, through the use of technology in special pilot projects, primarily in primary schools and are eager to assess the results.

If we want to expand this approach, we have to establish an e-Culture in all our schools for teaching and administration. And I am delighted to say that teachers and administrators are showing an enormous eagerness to make the switch by attending our training programmes in record numbers in their own time.

WCED has developed an online self-assessment competency instrument for teacher to

identify where they require additional training.

Statistics show how web traffic is growing in our schools. Page hits have increased from 375 million in June 2015 to over 3.8 billion Page Hits in January this year. An additional 745 million Page Hits were recorded in our libraries and Cape Access centres.

An interesting trend we've observed from our central dashboards, has been how data usage jumps from schools during learning hours, to our libraries and Cape Access Centres in the afternoons and school holidays.

While it is good to see our libraries so well used, we don't want to see a drop-off in internet traffic in our schools in the afternoons.

We are currently under-utilising our internet access opportunities in schools that are closed during the afternoon and evening. This has to change.

We pay tribute to the teachers and principals who give their learners access during the full day. It makes an enormous difference.

Honourable Speaker, The Cape Access programme has also managed to establish e-centres in each of the municipalities outside of the City of Cape Town.

By next month we will reach 70 e-centres across the province.

Recent centres added include the Bergriver Municipality towns of Eendekuil and Noordhoek, Hornlee in Knysna municipality, and the remote rural town of Merweville near Beaufort West.

E-Centres on the way soon include Op-die-Berg, Slangrivier, Lamberts Bay, Groot Brakriver, Riebeeck Wes, Riebeeck Kasteel and the Goedgedacht Trust Farm.

I urge all members to visit these centres to experience how they provide access to information, skills and opportunities, especially the youth in these communities.

Honourable Speaker, we are laying the foundation for a legacy of quality education in the Western Cape. This, in my view, is the most important function of provincial government: preparing young people to use their freedoms to enrich their own lives and develop our country.

This requires a strong educational base, and we are making progress as the following indicators show:

- **The matric pass rate is up from 75.7 to 86%**
- **Bachelors passes are up from 31.9 to 40.9%**
- **The proportion of Bachelors passes in Quintiles 1 – 3 (the poorest schools) has more than doubled.**

- The same goes for Distinctions in the poorest Quintiles, which have increased from 615 in 2009 to 1372 in 2016

The actual number of passes is steadily increasing and we have the highest retention rate in SA, which refers to keeping learners in school and preventing them dropping out before matric. The number of under-performing schools is also down from 85 in 2009 to 19 last year.

When the current administration took office in 2009, the pass rate in Quintile 1 schools (the poorest) was 57% - in 2016 it was 75%. Pass rate rises of over 18 percentage points were also recorded in Quintile 2 and 3 schools.

Amongst the record maths and science results this year was a 100% pass mark for physical science from a learner in one of our Quintile 1 schools - Sipehelele Xabendlini

Sipehelele arrived from the Eastern Cape in 2014 and started Grade 10 at Phandulwazi Secondary School in Phillippi.

Prior to his arrival at Phandulwazi, he had never studied Physical Science.

With support from his father, Mr Linda Xabendlini, his teachers and various study materials, Sipehelele learnt an entirely new, complex subject – and came first in the Western Cape, with an extraordinary result of 100%.

Today we are honoured to be joined by Sipehelele and Mr Xabendlini.

Congratulations to you Sipehelele. Siyavuyisana nani!

Anyone who hears about it is totally amazed at your achievement. But I want to say a word to Mr Xabendlini senior: Sipehelele has spoken most movingly about your interest in his education, and about your motivation and support. You are a role model for fathers. No government can ever replace the role of a committed parent, and in the case of boys and young men, the role of a committed father.

In March, Sipehelele will be starting his BCom degree in Business Science and Analytics at UCT.

We wish him all the best.

Honourable Speaker, we are achieving these successes by ensuring accountability within the education system, backed by a capable state.

We are the only province that conducts its own systemic testing. And we set the Pass rate at 50% for these tests. We also introduced more difficult language tests as early as 2011 – we are not looking for the good story, we are looking for the truth.

These tests are of great benefit to our schools and for every learner, especially our poorest learners. We went to court last year to stop the South African Democratic Teachers' Union disruptions of these tests, and many thanks must go to the communities who backed us by protecting their schools from disruption from a handful of teachers who should have been doing their jobs, like most were.

To improve systemic test outcomes, we put all primary school maths and language teachers through training over a 6-year period.

Now we are reaping the results in significant improvements, particularly in Grade 6 Mathematics results.

From 2014 to date, Grade 6 maths pass rate rose from 30.4 to 40.1%, based on a pass mark of 50%. While we still have a long way to go, these results bode well for mathematics in high schools in coming years. We still have to find an effective way of stopping the dip in the first two years of high school, grades 8 and 9.

A further accountability measure is the requirement for all schools to have a School Improvement Plan in place. This is a means of keeping principals and SGB's accountable to education outcomes. We will soon introduce regular monitoring of our schools through changes to the provincial Schools Act.

We are faced with major challenges given the demand for public schooling in the Western Cape.

We have introduced an online enrolment management system to help manage learner placement. But far too many parents wake up too late and find that they cannot enrol their children at a school of their choice, or often at any school. We battled to place over 17,000 pupils in school at the beginning of this year, mainly due to late enrolments.

The growth in pupil numbers - 95,000 over the past 6 years - has resulted in a demand for places far exceeding the supply, especially in schools offering quality education. Two weeks ago we opened the enrolments process for 2018. I am urging all parents and guardians to please move early.

We have stretched infrastructure budgets to their limits, building 2386 new classrooms and 120 new and replacement schools since 2009. An online Textbook ordering system has been in place since 2013, ensuring that books arrive on time for our growing number of learners.

We deliver all of this while achieving the only clean audit in South African education department. Many thanks to our internal audit committee and our "supply chain champions", as they are called within the provincial Education Department.

We have also protected pro-poor programmes within a strained fiscal environment.

Here are some our achievements:

- The number of learners attending no-fee schools has increased by 58% in the last 5 years, to almost 580 000 learners.
- Fee exemptions granted to learners at fee-paying schools has increased by 60% over the same period
- More than 97% of our schools are either no fee schools or have benefitted from compensation for fee exemption
- Over 475 000 learners receive not one, but two nutritious meals a day through our feeding schemes
- Over 58 000 Learners benefit from our transport scheme

All this is very good, but all our subsidy programmes will soon be unsustainable. That is why our number 1 priority must be jobs and growth, so that people can afford to contribute towards the added quality we routinely add to basic public education, and to keep pupil:teacher ratios manageable.

We know that regular, well-structured after-school programmes improve educational outcomes, reduce drop-out rates, increase self-confidence and improve potential for tertiary education and work placements.

But in disadvantaged schools, after school programmes are not the norm, which is limiting learners' potential and development.

That is why we have prioritised the expansion of quality after school sports, arts and culture, academic and life skills-programmes and elevated this attempt to game-changer status.

Our target is 112 000 learners attending quality after school activities on a regular and consistent basis by 2019.

We have made good progress in meeting this target.

To date we have just over 47 000 learners attending after school programmes on a regular basis and are on track to meet our 2016/17 target of 65 000 learners.

Madam Speaker, a well-functioning health system aligns its strategy and structures towards one, unifying purpose – in our case, access to Person-Centred quality care.

In a tough budget climate, the Department has to deliver its services as efficiently as possible.

The department's clean financial audit, unique in the country's Health sector, was achieved through tireless effort and attention to governance procedures by many individuals – we appreciate each one. Over the years we've spent the maximum possible on improving public healthcare.

We've spent R5 billion on capital infrastructure in health since we took office in 2009, R3.5 billion on new infrastructure and R1.5bn on maintenance.

Some of state-of-the-art facilities delivered during this period include district hospitals in Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain, expansions to our Knysna and Hermanus hospitals, revitalisation of the Paarl and George, and new primary healthcare facilities in Kwanokuthula, Delft, Grassy Park, Du Noon, Nomzamo and Knysna.

Research projections show that future demand for public healthcare demands will require a Regional Hospital for the Klipfontein area, which includes Manenberg, Gugulethu, Nyanga and Hanover Park amongst other communities.

The business case for such a hospital has now been approved by the National Department, and the funding application is in the process of being prepared. I will return to this topic in more detail shortly, in the context of the urban upgrades in Manenberg.

Further major build programmes in our extension of health services are underway in District 6, Hanover Park and Elsies River.

Honourable Speaker, in response to mental health needs we have made significant investment in psychiatric care, which are sadly becoming more and more needed because of the consequences of drug abuse, particularly methamphetamine or Tik.

The Cape Winelands District is now home to a fully functional Psychiatric Unit at Paarl Hospital, the first of its kind for the region.

We also opened a R110 million refurbishment to Valkenberg Hospital's Administration Building as part of an ongoing expansion to that facility.

At the operational level, our medicine distribution system ensures that stock-outs do not occur in our facilities for any medication the province is responsible for procuring. We have worked hard to establish a seamless flow from our Cape Medical Depot, to our larger facilities across the province, who then supply the smaller facilities.

This year is the 50th Anniversary of the world's first heart transplant, performed in Cape Town's Groote Schuur Hospital by Dr Chris Barnard. Our Cultural Affairs and Sport Department will support a travelling exhibition to honour this milestone.

It is good to see our institutions continuing this proud history of innovation today.

In fact, just 3 weeks ago ground-breaking surgery was performed at Groote Schuur by surgeons reaching a lesion in the skull base through a patient's eye socket.

The operation was done on a 64 year old pensioner from the Athlone area. No scars are visible after the operation and the patient was able to go to a general ward straight away.

To our knowledge this is the first operation of its kind in the world.

Expanding brain surgery through eye sockets means far fewer invasive cranial procedures and much quicker recovery times for patients.

Innovation is happening at all levels in our facilities ensuring better quality patient care. A good recent example is Mitchell's Plain Community Health Centre. In this regard, please join me in welcoming Sister Zethu Xapile, Facility Manager at Mitchell's Plain Community Health Centre.

The facility's Back-to-Basics system ensures that chronic patients receive their medication pre-packed and available for pick-up on arrival. We know when to have the meds ready because the facility's Chronic Club schedules return visits for the last day of a patient's medicine supply.

With this system, stable chronic patients effectively bypass the Pharmacy and simply collect their medicines. This frees up the pharmacy to deliver services to acutely ill patients.

Waiting times are down 60% at the clinic's pharmacy, and picking up pre-packed meds now takes patients just 5 –10 minutes.

Thank you Sister Zethu for all you and your colleagues are achieving in your selfless commitment to improving public healthcare in this province.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to staff across our facilities, working day in day out under challenging conditions to service a growing population of uninsured citizens

Let's take a moment to appreciate in particular our Emergency Medical Services staff, who while going about their duty of saving lives, have been attacked by criminals on many occasions.

From our records of past criminal incidents, we have designated 10 Red zones in the City where EMS staff now enter only via police escort

We have launched Operation Khuseleka as a means of supporting our staff, including counselling, additional safety equipment and building coalitions with local neighbourhood watches

We appeal to communities to work with us to protect our staff, so that we can focus on saving lives.

We must also make progress in preventing preventable illnesses. We are not making adequate progress in this area at all. AIDS which used to dominate newspaper health coverage, has all but vanished from the front pages of Western Cape newspapers. This is because of our world-class comprehensive testing and treatment regime. Aids has become a chronic rather than a fatal disease and this switch has made people complacent. We should be intensifying, not diminishing our focus on this disease.

I was totally appalled to learn, during my research for this speech, that after decades of AIDS campaigns, the probability of a 15-year old South African girl becoming HIV positive is still 35%. More than 1 in 3. Although the statistic in the Western Cape is substantially lower (20% or 1 in five) this number is still, frankly, incomprehensible. It is the direct result of the indefensible Blesser culture. Currently there are over 250,000 new HIV infections per year in South Africa. Infected people can fortunately now enjoy a normal life expectancy if they access free treatment. But they have to remain on treatment life-long. And if we add almost 300,000 people to this pool every year, it is clear that the AIDS budget will erode the resource base of the rest of the health care system. It is not affordable. And we have to talk about it. Not the politically correct topic that still avoids the real issue. We have to talk about the fact that unprotected sex, especially inter-generational sex, spreads AIDS and therefore we have to stop this practice. Which part of this is so hard to understand and face?

Which brings me to public safety in general.

If we could get this right it would be the biggest game changer of all, but we do not have the constitutional mandate to perform this function.

Police, and the entire criminal justice pipeline, are a mandate of national government. We have oversight powers, which we are using to their fullest extent.

The Western Cape Community Safety Act, for the first time, provides a legal framework for the accreditation of Neighbourhood Watch structures.

Our accreditation system allows for Neighbourhood Watches to access resources, training and equipment from our Community Safety Department. The City of Cape Town will in future also align their support programmes to accredited neighbourhood watches.

There has been a lot of enthusiasm for our Walking Bus model, a system where adults volunteer to create safer routes to school for learners, by chaperoning them in convoy to and from the premises.

Walking Buses were recently launched in 28 neighbourhoods with strong community support.

A good example is the vicinity of Nelson Mandela High School in Nyanga, where a pilot project is in place with a local neighbourhood watch and where safety has improved significantly.

We are calling on the public to help us expand this model in more communities. We already run a comprehensive Safe Schools programme, with a R30 million budget. We

actively support schools to develop safety plans, report incidents, provide counselling to learners, and mobilise community support to protect their school property.

Honourable Speaker, I read with interest that President Jacob Zuma paid an unannounced visit to Nyanga police station this week. The precinct consistently has the highest number of murders in the country, and accounted for a full 10% of all murder cases in the province over the last decade. It used to be slap-bang in the middle of my constituency, so I know.

Listening to the complaints of local police officers about a lack of resources, President Zuma responded with a curious question: what were the police doing to combat drugs in Nyanga? Did they have a plan in place?

What is remarkable about the President's enquiry is that he has been making promises for several years now about re-introducing specialised units to combat drugs, guns and gangs. He promised this step in his 2016 SONA, and this year simply repeated it without any progress update.

He should have been there to tell the police officers in Nyanga when they can expect the specialised drug units supporting them with more boots on the ground. He should tell them why the SAPS, which falls under his national mandate, has not prioritised a second police station, nor to our knowledge made any request for a property to build one.

In Nyanga the average police to population ratio is one officer for every 754 people, compared to the national average of one officer for every 358 people. The lack of policing resources is a major contributing factor to the unacceptable crime rates. On your next visit please tell us what you plan to do about it.

So it was bizarre to read reports about the President accusing the local police of not doing enough to deal with crime in Nyanga. In fact, in his reply to the State of the Nation debate in Parliament yesterday, it sounded as if the President had only just discovered the crisis in our criminal justice system. He has the mandate to deal with it.

In fact, the whole criminal justice pipeline is in dire need of repair.

Police detectives are profoundly over-burdened, making it difficult to secure convictions. Far too often, perpetrators are back on the streets, causing confidence in the criminal justice system to wane, and encouraging people to take the law into their own hands.

Our court Watching Briefs Unit has been expanded to over 25 courts this year. In the past year alone, we examined 662 criminal cases that would otherwise have fallen out of

the broken pipeline, between police, prosecutors and the courts. Many of these cases are back on the court rolls due to the intervention of the Unit.

The office of the Police Ombudsman, Advocate Vusi Pikoli, is up and running, investigating complaints of police inefficiencies and the breakdown of the relationship between communities and SAPS.

The Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry also made important proposals for improving policing, which continue to influence safety initiatives in Khayelitsha and elsewhere. We thank Cluster Commander Johan Brand, Provincial Commissioner Khombinkosi Jula and their many colleagues for working with us so productively in this regard.

Honourable Speaker, I now wish to turn to a social problem that is a leading driver of crime, vehicle crashes, and interpersonal violence - alcohol abuse.

Everyone in the Western Cape is acutely aware of the harmful effects of alcohol abuse in our province. It is even worse than the evil effect of illegal drugs. This is a problem that requires all spheres of governments to co-operate effectively, together with affected communities.

It requires the liquor industry to take much greater responsibility for ensuring responsible trading rather than just exhorting people to drink responsibly.

Law enforcement, behaviour change and an industry that operates within the law, in letter and in spirit, is essential to reduce the significant intentional and unintentional injuries associated with alcohol abuse.

As a provincial government, we know only too well our limited influence to reduce alcohol consumption and its harmful effects. Yet the scale of the problem demands that we at least try. For this reason, we introduced an Alcohol Harms Reduction Game Changer. It has proved the most difficult and intractable by far.

We have chosen to start our work in some of the most challenging areas, where alcohol is a major contributor to violent crime and abuse. Our goal is to reduce alcohol related intentional injuries and fatalities, starting in Khayelitsha, Gugulethu and Nyanga (Gunya) and Paarl East.

Through our best endeavours, we would like to create an environment in these areas where the rule of law prevails, which will automatically reduce access to alcohol.

But this also requires a greater offering of recreational and economic alternatives for the high risk 18 to 35-year old age group. We are keen to facilitate and promote these alternatives that importantly, must be rooted in communities and run by social and business entrepreneurs, not government.

That said, as a government, we can directly contribute to reducing alcohol related harms and enhancing social services in communities.

In the past year, we have tested a number of potential solutions, and we are currently assessing their impact and what more, and what else, we can do.

In particular, we need to sharpen the influence and role of the Western Cape Liquor Authority as a key partner in regulating the alcohol industry. Licence fees and fines will increase.

We are aware that the shebeens far outnumber licensed premises and our focus will be on moving towards legalising some illegal outlets, coupled with a drive to ensure responsible trading, targeted at the industry and stopping illegal liquor sales, particularly in dense residential areas.

We are getting a much clearer picture of the impact of alcohol on our health through a programme we have introduced called Brief Motivational Interventions, BMI, at emergency centres in our three targeted communities.

People land up in a trauma ward for a variety of reasons. In a great many of cases, injuries can be attributed to alcohol abuse – 42% according to our BMI records.

The focus of this programme is to reach the most susceptible people with a behaviour changing message, in the hopes it will sink in at a later stage and reduce alcohol related harms being repeated.

The BMI intervention is designed to try and convince them to change their risky behaviour, and offer further treatment if needed.

Many of the people who are engaged in risky drinking are not alcoholics needing rehab, they are weekend binge drinkers who need to realise that their behaviour is risky and can result in harms to themselves and others.

This shows the extent of the high burden alcohol abuse is placing on our health system. We call on citizens to support our efforts to ensure that the trading in liquor is done legally and responsibly.

Honourable Speaker, in the past month we released amendments to the provincial Liquor Act for public comment. We are using the insight gained over the last year to create the regulatory environment required for alcohol harms reduction.

We are serious about compliance. Traders must remain within the law, and not find loopholes to circumvent it.

That is why the maximum fine the Liquor Licensing Tribunal can impose has increased from R20 000 to R100 000 per incident. We will offer an appeals mechanism to ensure that matters are resolved fairly and as speedily as possible.

We will also be appointing 5 more liquor inspectors to extend the monitoring of the system. If you don't want to face the wrath of the law, do not break the law.

The amended regulations also place a responsibility on Liquor Inspectors in the province to visit all premises or vehicles where suspicions on reasonable grounds exist that liquor is being stored, conveyed or sold contrary to the provisions of the Liquor Act.

Our Alcohol Harms Reduction Green Paper was also released for public comment in the past year, incorporating our entire strategy.

Driving under the influence of alcohol, and pedestrians walking under the influence of alcohol, continue to be the most consistent contributor to injury and death on our roads.

Our Transport and Public Works Department have worked hard to reintroduce Evidentiary breath alcohol testing, commonly known as the Draeger device. Electronic breath alcohol testing can rapidly determine whether a driver is over the legal limit. This has the potential to speed up legal processes against persons driving under the influence.

Besides enforcing the law, we are further committed to enhancing the quality of alcohol related health and social services in communities.

Our prevention and treatment programmes reached 12 500 people last year, with a big focus on awareness about foetal alcohol syndrome. This is yet another 100% preventable condition -- with 100% irreversible harms for new lives and for society as a whole. We simply have to put a stop to this scourge.

The abuse of both alcohol and drugs remains an enormous problem in our province. A total of 23 626 clients have accessed substance abuse services since 2014.

The Social Development Department has steadily expanded its services over the years. We have more than trebled the number of substance abuse treatment sites from seven in 2009, to 25 today.

Adolescent matrix programmes are also available at schools in Kuilsriver, Eerste River, Steenberg, Lavender Hill, Hout Bay and Elsies River.

Again, we have to prevent preventable conditions. Addiction is a disease but it can be prevented. And the role of parents and families is central to this process. No state can substitute for the functional family.

Honourable Speaker, our social problems may be many, and they are often geographically concentrated.

We are using every possible lever to mitigate them. An important one is urban design to positively transform neighbourhoods. Nowhere is this more necessary than in communities most impacted by gang violence, drugs and alcohol abuse.

Since 2015, the Province, City of Cape Town and our community partners have jointly been working towards the vision of a Youth Lifestyle Campus in Manenberg – a network of education and after schools facilities, linked by safe promenades and upgraded lighting and infrastructure.

The community is also being prioritised by the City’s Mayoral Urban Regeneration Programme.

We have been helped every step of the way in Manenberg by the VPUU not-for-profit organisation, that provide the interface between community and government. All partners recently participated in the annual Community Action Plan review.

Integral to implementing this Vision - from a provincial perspective - is a Schools Upgrade Programme.

The provincial education department receives funding for the upgrade of “plankie” schools in Manenberg, through the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative (ASIDI).

These funds are transferred from the national Department of Basic Education, and have been utilised to replace the Silverstream and Red River Primary Schools in Manenberg.

The Western Cape Government, through the provincial Education Department, will fund any further replacement of schools in the area.

Funding will be made available to replace plankie schools with 3 new school buildings in the community. Each school will be constructed in compliance with the minimum infrastructure norms and standards and will include modern after schools facilities, in line with the Youth Lifestyle Campus vision.

We also agreed that it would benefit the youth of Manenberg to include a School of Skills within the Upgrade Programme. This unique schooling model was designed by

our education department to provide young people an alternative pathway into apprenticeships and jobs.

A Request For Proposals will also be issued by the provincial Department of Public Works this year to use all or part of the former hospital site on Duinefontein Road for skills and community development use.

Our Department of Health's planning indicates that a Regional Hospital, a necessity for future healthcare demand, will require 7 hectares of land, as it will comprise 550 beds – much larger than each of our district hospitals in Mitchell's Plain and Khayelitsha.

The City of Cape Town is also investing in various upgrades to public infrastructure in the community, including lighting, roads and parks.

Viewed together, this proposed infrastructure package represents a massive public investment in the community of Manenberg and its surrounds, and particularly our youth.

In order for the vision to become a reality, the current spatial landscape in Manenberg will obviously also be required to change. Each proposed step will still have to follow its own legislated process, including the public participation that is required. It is bureaucratic and time consuming but we have to work within the law with every sector involved.

The infrastructure upgrades seek to use urban design to transform a community, creating opportunities for quality education, after-school and business activity. But it will all be pointless if the community does not become an active partner in transforming their environment.

Honourable Speaker, we are targeting a further seven municipalities in the Province for urban upgrading projects through our Regional Socio-Economic Programme, the RSEP, working hand in hand with the VPUU.

The Province has committed R165 million for this programme over a four year period. A further R70 million has been pledged by the German Development Bank for implementation of the tried-and-tested partnership methodology. The Bank has been a reliable ongoing partner, to which we are extremely grateful.

RSEP projects are currently being implemented in the Saldanha, Swartland and Breede Valley municipalities, with the Drakenstein and Theewaterskloof municipalities targeted by VPUU.

I am pleased to welcome Chris Smal as a guest today. Chris, working for Breede Valley municipality, almost single-handedly rolled out 30 RSEP community projects in the Worcester area in just over a year.

The neighbourhoods we are targeting in partnership with the local municipality are Zwelethemba, Avian Park, Roodewal and Riverview.

Completed projects include upgrades to parks, facilities, pedestrian walkways, rubbish collection points, and stand-pipes in informal settlements.

In a short space of time, multi-purpose sports courts and recreational facilities have been built for young people to play netball, basketball and soccer.

Chris has also harnessed the passion and commitment of local residents, assisting a local church in Avian Park with the building of a BMX track that will serve as a positive recreational alternative for young people in the community. This is the whole-of-society approach in action thanks driven by people with the inspiration, energy and focus of Mr Smal. We appreciate the good work you are doing, and appreciate the partnership we are building with Breede Valley Municipality.

Conclusion

Honourable Speaker, today I have presented a progress report for the provincial government. It is not exhaustive. The various Ministers will flesh out future plans in their budget speeches over the next few weeks.

Suffice to say that we are a strong and cohesive team, working under the diligent oversight of this Legislature, to position our province for the future. We have come a significant distance, but there is much to accomplish in the remainder of our term. We have set ourselves enormous stretch targets, and we are pursuing them tirelessly to achieve our long term vision.

Which is simply this: to give every person living in this province the opportunities they need to use their freedoms, in order to live lives they value.

I thank you

