

2009 IMFO CONFERENCE PAPER

TOPIC: Poverty Alleviation by Local Government: Are we doing enough?

BY: Krish Kumar (Deputy City Manager: Treasury, Ethekwini Municipality)

1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty alleviation is an issue that is very near and dear to my heart. To me it is undoubtedly the biggest development challenge we face in South Africa. At the outset I would like to share with you this heart wrenching story by Ami Nanackchand (Post, 12 August 2009):

Anele Xulu is a rather reserved 13-year old. She lives in a parentless and workless household which she heads on the fringes of Durban. The little girl returns home tired on most days because the mornings are long. Waking up at the crack of dawn she leaves her bed to walk a few kilometers to attend to a couple of household chores which her late mother handled.

Knowing that the pot has not boiled for her and her two siblings, she returns via the local school. Not to join her friends and neighbours in the classroom. But to grab a few slices of bread and some broth served under the school's nutrition system.

Left with no option she is forced to come face-to-face with the reality of survival as she witnessed her childhood taken away from her when her parents passed away.

The testimonies of children like Anele Xulu speak for themselves.

Our great Madiba once said, “It should never be that the anger of the poor should be the finger of accusation pointed at all of us because we failed to respond to the cries of the people for food, for shelter, for the dignity of the individual.”

In view of the recent service delivery protests, I would suggest that the finger of accusation is squarely pointed at you and me by the poor of our country.

However, I would be the first to acknowledge that since 1994 we have made great progress with regard to the huge service delivery backlogs, unemployment, inequality and dire poverty we inherited from the Apartheid regime.

2. PROGRESS SINCE 1994

Significant progress has been made in transforming our economy and society since 1994. In this regard, we can record the following:

- We had the longest economic growth and expansion recorded in South African history. From 1994 to 2003 the economy grew at an average of 3% to 5% per annum. The country’s investment as a share of GDP rose from 15% in 2002 to more than 22% by 2008. However, the current global economic recession has led to negative growth in GDP over the past two quarters.
- Unemployment has decreased from 31% in 2003 to 23% in 2007, and is currently 23,6% using the official narrow definition. This has translated into 500,000 new jobs being created annually since 2004. However unemployment remains unacceptably high.
- Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) coverage has been expanded to include nearly a million domestic workers and farm workers. Access to social grants has massively increased from 3 million people in 1997 to 12.5 million in 2008, 8 million of whom are children under 14 years;

- 3.1 million subsidized houses were built, including 2.7 million houses, giving shelter to an additional 14 million people. In 2007 over 70% of South Africans lived in formal houses.
- 18.7 million people have access to clean water and 10.9 million provided with sanitation. The number of households with the bucket system reduced from 605 675 in 1994 to 113 085 in 2007.
- The expansion of electricity has reached 80% of the population.
- In health, progress has been recorded through the expansion of free primary health care. We have expanded health infrastructure, including the building and upgrading of 1,600 clinics and 18 new hospitals. Many public hospitals have been revitalized and refurbished. We have increased the Anti Retroviral Treatment rollout programme with more than 480,000 people enrolled. The National Health Insurance scheme is now being looked at.
- Although education is not a local government function, it is closely linked to the issue of employment and poverty. In this regard, access to our primary and secondary schooling has reached near-universal enrolment, with the participation of girls being the highest in the world. A total of 98% of children aged from 7 to 15 years are enrolled in schools; 88% for 6 years olds; and participation rate for children in early childhood development aged 4 and 5, (Grade R) has now reached 70%. Pupil-to-teacher ratios have improved from 43:1 in 1996 to 32:1 in 2006. The mass literacy campaign is now covering more than 500,000 of our people who could not read and write. We are well within target to ensure South Africa is free of illiteracy by 2014.

However, notwithstanding the abovementioned achievements, you will undoubtedly agree with me that much more needs to be done. Whilst we still have people like Anele Xulu amongst us we cannot rest on our laurels. Sad to say, we have many more Anele Xulu's. According to the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) study released this year nearly 70% of South Africa's children live in poverty!

3. POVERTY AND INEQUALITY STATISTICS & TREND ANALYSES

3.1 Poverty Head Count Index

% of population living below various poverty lines

Poverty Line	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
R462 pm			53					58					48		
R367 pm	50	51	52	53	51	51	52	51	51	49	48	47	45	43	41
R250 pm			31					38					23		

Using various income poverty measures, the number of people living in poverty has declined, especially from 1999 to 2007. However, whilst good work has been done, the current situation of over 40% of our people still only earning just R367 per month is still cause for great concern. Nearly half (48%) of our population is still earning less than 2\$ per day.

3.2 Poverty indicators by province

Province	No. of poor persons (million)	% of population in poverty	Poverty gap (R billion)	Share of poverty gap
Eastern Cape	4.6	72%	14.8	18.2%
Free State	1.8	68%	5.9	7.2%

Gauteng	3.7	42%	12.1	14.9%
KwaZulu-Natal	5.7	61%	18.3	22.5%
Limpopo	4.1	77%	11.5	14.1%
Mpumalanga	1.8	57%	7.1	8.7%
North West	1.9	52%	6.1	7.5%
Northern Cape	0.5	61%	1.5	1.8%
Western Cape	1.4	32%	4.1	5.0%

With its large, poor population KwaZulu-Natal has the biggest poverty gap (R18 billion). The Eastern Cape and Gauteng follow KwaZulu-Natal. Gauteng's poverty gap has grown faster between 1996 and 2001 than all the other provinces. This is probably a result of its population growth rapidly exceeding economic growth.

Among municipalities, Durban has the largest poverty gap, followed by Johannesburg and East Rand.

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in collaboration with Mr Andrew Whiteford, a South African economist, has estimated poverty rates for each municipality. The majority of municipalities with the lowest poverty rates are found in the Western Cape. These include Stellenbosch (23%) and Saldanha Bay (25%). The major city with the lowest poverty rate is Cape Town (30%). Pretoria and Johannesburg have somewhat higher rates of 35% and 38%, respectively, while Durban has a rate of 44%. Accordingly, the Ethekwini Municipality is the Metro that has inherited the highest poverty rate in the country.

The poverty gap has grown faster than the economy indicating that poor households have not shared in the benefits of economic growth. In 1996 the total poverty gap was equivalent to 6.7% of gross domestic product (GDP), but by 2001 it had risen to 8.3%.

4. MUCH MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE

As can be clearly seen from the foregoing statistics, despite the major achievements of the last 15 years much more needs to be done. Many households and communities, including single-headed and child-headed communities, remain trapped in poverty.

Unemployment remains unacceptably high. Related to this has been a growth in casualised, sub-contracted and outsourced labour. The current unemployment has increased to 23,6% based on the narrow definition of unemployment. However, based on the wide or extended definition of unemployment this figure is closer to 50%.

Inequality has increased, with a growing number of working poor. Accompanying high unemployment and inequality is the rising cost of living for many of our people.

In the above regard, the Polokwane Conference identified five priority areas for the new government:

- creation of decent work and sustainable livelihoods
- health
- education and skills development
- crime
- rural development, including land reform, food production and security

What can we as local government do to support these priority areas?

5. CREATION OF DECENT WORK AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

For most people and their families and communities the main route out of poverty, and the key to reducing the risk of falling into poverty, is decent and productive work. Decent work sums up the aspirations of ordinary people in their

working lives. However, there must be a balance between pay levels and productivity.

Decent jobs can only be created in a context of improved productivity. This includes efforts aimed at enhancing technological innovation, harnessing information and communication technologies, optimising energy systems, and improving staff performance and productivity.

Accordingly as financial practitioners together with HR we have a vital role to play in terms of ensuring that our staff are productive. Productivity measures need to be put into place to measure, monitor and compare performance. Performance appraisals should be based on such key performance indicators. We can no longer afford to have unproductive staff. It is a disservice to the poor and to the creation of decent work.

If we cannot be productive and ensure value for money, we will have to look at alternate service delivery mechanisms. In this regard, I like the idea of competitive tendering, where each function is treated as a business and have to tender for work from the City together with firms from the outside. If external companies are more competitive, then the internal department will lose out on the work. This will have negative ramifications for internal staff, but will also increase the jobs in the market. However, most importantly it will improve service delivery to the poor.

Similarly, as financial staff we need to change the way we do business. As I have mentioned at previous conferences, we need to become **financial consultants** to the business rather than being just bean counters. We need to be passionate about service delivery and poverty alleviation and become **change agents**. We also **need to look at the Treasury as being a business** on its own and how we are contributing towards the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the City. **If**

we are not adding such value, I would suggest that we seriously question our existence.

Further, municipalities can promote labour-intensive industries, where artisan skills are required. For example, when we attract industries, such as motor industries, we must ensure that there is at least an assembly line in our cities to ensure job creation. However, in the current economic conditions this will be difficult to achieve.

Furthermore, the primary responsibility of municipalities is to create a conducive environment for business to grow and create more jobs. With globalization, we have to ensure that our companies are competitive globally. We need to provide them with a competitive advantage by keeping their costs of doing business in our cities to the minimum. Ultimately it these companies that will provide our people with jobs and help take them out of poverty, but we have a very important role to play.

One of the main obstacles to new business emerging in South Africa is the lack of ease to start and do business in South Africa. In South Africa there are currently a myriad of processes to open a business which takes a minimum of 35 days to complete. By comparison, Australia is the best with 2 days and Canada the next best with 3 days. We are ranked 89th of 177 countries in this regard. Many of these processes relate to local government. Accordingly, we could review and shorten these processes. We could also look at one-stop shops and co-ordinate the approvals for the applicants thus shortening the timeframe. The process could also be automated to expedite same.

The Extended Public Works is one of the South African Government's short-to-medium term programmes aimed at the provision of additional work opportunities coupled with training. Two fundamental strategies underpin the government's approach to reducing unemployment. Firstly, to increase economic growth so

that the number of net new jobs created begins to exceed the number of new entrants into the labour market (supply exceeds demand), and secondly to improve the education system such that the workforce is able to take up the largely skilled work opportunities which economic growth will generate. However, it must be noted that the EPWP will not solve the structural unemployment problem. It is merely one element within a broader government strategy to reduce poverty through the alleviation and reduction of unemployment.

The Expanded Public Works Programme Phase 2 was launched in April 2009. The goal of EPWP Phase 2 is to create 2 million full time equivalent (FTE) jobs for poor and unemployed people in South Africa so as to contribute to halving unemployment by 2014, through the delivery of public and community services. (This will scale up from 210,000 FTE jobs per year in 2009/10 to 610 000 FTE jobs in 2013/14). This translates to 4.5 million (short and ongoing) work opportunities. The average duration of employments is assumed to be 100 days. This will scale up from 500 000 work opportunities in 2009 to 1.5 million in 2014

Accordingly, municipalities are expected to deliberately optimise the creation of work opportunities for unemployed and poor people in South Africa through the delivery of public and community services.

6. HEALTH

Primary health care is not a local government function.

However, financial practitioners could assist with ensuring the improved management of clinics and streamlining the processes involved to ensure the productivity of staff. I see the future role of CFO's and Accountants as being integral to driving technology in the business. Accordingly, financial staff supporting the health function should be looking at new and innovative ways of doing business in clinics by using technology. For example, in the registration of

patients, queue management, etc, to overhaul the management system. The rollout of fibre optic to clinics and later to residents will also change the patient and health care relationship.

A current issue is the scarcity of doctors to work at our clinics. Municipalities could address this through partnerships with universities and offering scholarships. (improved human resources management)

We could also assist with the acceleration of the HIV and AIDS and STI plans. HIV-AIDS is leading to a lot of orphans and child-headed households living in poverty. In 2005 there were approximately 3.4 million orphans in South Africa, of which 26% were resident in KwaZulu-Natal. At the Ethekewini Municipality we provide such households with a rates rebate. Properties valued under R400 000 do not pay rates.

Free basic services are also a vital source of assistance. These packages of services need to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is having the necessary impact. Accordingly, the equitable share needs to also be reviewed.

Hopefully, the newly proposed National Health Insurance scheme will help address some of the issues.

Furthermore, in addition to allopathic medication, alternate or allied medication could be looked at. For example, traditional African medication and Ayurveda could be used to treat people who accept such forms of medication. This will be a more cost effective option for government. The herbs and plants required for this could be sourced and propagated by the municipal nurseries.

7. EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Education is also not a local government function.

However, skills development is very closely linked to employment, and ultimately poverty alleviation and inequality reduction. Although the issue has been debated, it is generally accepted that there is a skills shortage in South Africa. Municipalities can play a huge role in skilling our people by establishing trainee schemes, learnerships and apprenticeships. These investments can also be claimed back from the SETA which makes great financial sense.

Further, partnerships could be entered with tertiary institutions so that they are aware of our skills requirements and thus can supply us with same. Thus ensuring that supply meets demand.

8. CRIME

The Metro Police Service can be used to supplement the SAPS force efforts. In Ethekwini, the mandate of the Metro Police Service has recently been expanded to include crime prevention. However, crime has a very weak relationship with poverty alleviation although some criminologists do view poverty as a cause of crimes such as house burglaries and petty thefts. Accordingly, poverty alleviation could be seen as a way of reducing economic crimes.

9. RURAL DEVELOPMENT: FOOD PRODUCTION AND SECURITY

In my view, this is where our main focus should be.

Rural development is a central pillar in our struggle against unemployment, poverty and inequality. People living in rural areas face the harshest conditions of poverty, food insecurity and lack of access to services on an almost daily basis. Workers in rural areas face the brunt of poverty. Many of them work long hours for poverty wages, in particular women. This is also leading to many of the youth migrating to the urban areas in search of better pay and living conditions. However, this has put greater pressure on urban areas which are failing to accommodate them. Accordingly, effective rural development programmes are essential.

However, the issue of food production and food security is the most pressing issue at the moment, especially in the current economic climate. Steps need to be taken to promote the production of our food and thus reduce our reliance on imports. My suggestion in this regard is that we adopt a “**one person, one day, one meal**” programme to at least provide the poorest of the poor with one meal a day.

Food security needs to become the responsibility of all spheres of government. Food security is part of the section 27 Constitutional rights in South Africa. On these rights, the Constitution states that every citizen has the right to have access to sufficient food and water, and that “the state must by legislation and other measures, within its available resources, avail to progressive realization of the right to sufficient food. Further, the President, Jacob Zuma, in his State of the Nation Address on 3 June 2009 identified as a priority the need to work with our people in the rural areas to ensure a comprehensive rural development strategy linked to land and agrarian reform and food security. Finally, at the NCOP workshop held on 28 September 2009, agriculture with a focus on support to small and emerging farmers and co-operatives, food security, water recycling and water desalination were identified as priority areas.

In this regard, the Ethekewini Municipality took the lead and established an Agricultural Management Unit. The Ethekewini area has been divided into five zones for the purposes of the agricultural roll out process. Each zone will be managed by a horticulturist together with the necessary support staff and resources. There is a move away from traditional agriculture that usually involves monoculture, inorganic fertilizers, pesticides and heavy equipment that destroys soil structure and fauna/flora.

The municipality will be sending 12 horticulturists/specialists for training on bio-intensive mini farming. As the term implies, the intention of this approach is to

produce the maximum units of food from the smallest possible area using minimum inputs in the way of water, effort, etc.

The city has also initiated a composting programme using digested biosolids from the sewage treatment plants and garden refuse from the garden disposal sites.

Growers will also be trained in value adding to increase income and deal with surpluses. Once growers have grasped the concept of bio-intensive mini farms, the next level of training will involve the establishment of food forests. Food forests create permanence in the landscape whilst producing food over a long period with minimal inputs. Accordingly, initiatives such as food forests could help feed the poorest of the poor and alleviate economic crimes committed by people trying to feed themselves.

I view the improved management of water resources are key to the survival of our planet. In this regard, I see water reuse as essential. To this end, the city has embarked on the construction of the first large scale biodigester at Cato Manor. Sewage from the local households will be treated in the biodigester and will then be used to grow fish, plants (aquaponics), and irrigate cultivated lands. A by-product of the digestion process is methane gas that will be captured and used for heating water, drying produce, etc. The Ethekewini Municipality has registered its landfill gas to electricity project and CER's are sold. R1.55 million was received from the first stage with a potential income of R25 million per annum.

Further, to address the issue of a lack of bulk water supply in certain catchment areas, the Ethekewini Municipality has embarked on several rain harvesting projects to supplement the existing water supply. For example, the Mzinyathi project has 1 000 rain water harvesting tanks with 8 000 beneficiaries. All these Projects are also associated with garden projects.

Interestingly, the new Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban has been designed to capture the water from its roof and transfer it to underground tanks.

Aquaculture represents an excellent way in which one can add value to water. Fish farming represents the most economical conversion of feed to edible protein. The city is in the process of setting up a prototype at the Northdene Water Treatment plant to demonstrate community based aquaculture using a low-tech approach. Further, poultry and livestock farming are also being looked at.

However, looking at the bigger picture of Africa, one in three Africans are malnourished, and about half of our nearly 700 million people live on less than \$1 a day whilst almost 80% live on less than \$2 a day. One child in Africa dies every 5 seconds due to hunger. The African continent, once a net exporter of food, now imports one third of its grain. More than 40 per cent of Africans do not have the ability to obtain sufficient food on a daily basis. For African farmers, conventional fertilizers cost two to six times more than the world market price.

In the above regard, the World Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) suggests the key to solving the hunger and poverty in Africa is the small farmer. Improving Africa's stagnating agricultural sector is the key to solving these issues. Further, IFPRI's global food model projections to 2015 show that a smallholder-led agricultural transformation of Africa is technically and economically feasible. Accordingly, we need to revitalize the smallholder sector in Africa by providing support in terms of seeds and compost. Access to markets and technology or expertise could also be facilitated. Raising the outputs of small farmers would not increase their income and food security, but would also lower national food prices, stimulate the rest of the economy and reduce poverty. Each 1% increase in agricultural productivity in Africa has been shown to reduce poverty by 0.6%. Stated differently, **a 1% increase in yields can help 6 million more people**

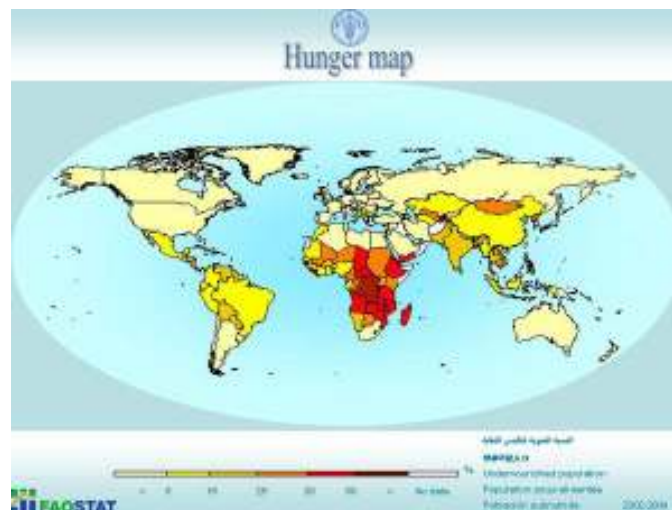
raise their incomes above \$1 dollar per day. Accordingly, this could lead to huge cuts in Africa's rural poverty within a couple of decades.

Inadequate infrastructure in rural areas is a major problem. In this regard, municipalities can assist by promoting rain harvesting for water, look at wind and solar power, satellite and mobile phone communication to assist with access to markets, etc.

Agricultural yields in Africa are low compared with other countries with similar agroclimates. Accordingly, municipalities need to provide technical support and expertise to subsistence and smallholder farmers.

In addition, the Ethekewini Municipality has also just been named as the hosts of the 2013 World Soybean Research Conference to be held at our ICC. We see soya as playing a major role in South Africa's and Africa's hunger problems, especially as soya is generally regarded as the cheapest form of protein. Soya has a protein yield of over 700 kg/H whilst for rice it is 290, maize 240, wheat 150, milk 92, eggs 85, and beef 22. Protein produced from the following sources on one acre of land can sustain man for: 75 days (cattle), 350 days (maize), 875 days (wheat), and 2 200 days (soya)!

Soya could be the answer to Africa's hunger and poverty problems!



The protein requirement of any individual is approximately 1g per kg body weight per day (0.75g according to FAO). If the average weight of a person is 75kg and the protein content of soya is 35% then one person requires approximately 6.4 kg of soybeans per month. At R3 800 per ton (SAFEX price as at 4 December 2008) this equates to a cost of R18.35 / person / month. The population of Africa is close to 300 million. Accordingly, the total requirement to feed Africa is 23.14 million tons. However, in Africa there are 425 million hectares of suitable land for soya farming with a yield potential of 832 million tons. In Africa we currently produce only 1.3 million tons as compared to USA who produces 83,9 million tons.

Soya is also good for other crops due to the nitrates it contributes to the soil, and thus can be used on a crop rotation basis with other crops. Further, it can be used for producing biofuels. For example, 60-100 litres of diesel or 600 litres of oil can be produced from a hectare.

Soya is also good for your health and assists with preventing heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, menopausal symptoms, brain diseases linked with ageing, and inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis.

Food banks are also another good idea. Food Bank South Africa has already opened food banks in Cape Town, Johannesburg and in Durban with one in Port Elizabeth in the pipeline. Food Bank South Africa is part of an international movement, the Global Foodbanking Network. The food bank procures good quality food which is donated by the food and grocery industries, government agencies, individuals and other organizations. The food is safely stored, using refrigeration where necessary, sorted into nutritionally sensible packages, and delivered to beneficiary agencies such as schools, soup kitchens and HIV/AIDS clinics. Food is delivered to agencies after they have been assessed based on

need. But they are urged, with the help of the Food Bank, to become self-sufficient within a year, when they are re-assessed. There are several programmes in this regard, including planting vegetables and sewing programmes. The aim is to build 20 food banks in South Africa by December 2011. Each of the food banks in South Africa are currently collecting, warehousing and distributing between 40 and 300 tons of food every month. As one of the founder members of the Port Elizabeth Food Bank said, “we have a moral duty to feed the hungry in the most effective way possible.” Food banks are certainly proving to be an effective mechanism to alleviating hunger and poverty. Accordingly, each municipality is encouraged to look at introducing such food banks within their areas of control.

Soup kitchens are yet another way of providing the poor with at least one meal a day. Partnerships in this regard could be forged with the private sector to rollout these kitchens which could also be mobile. Further, the Ethekewini’s Market Division is considering a processing plant for soup packs. We are also exploring the surplus produce from market gardens also being used for soup packs.

The Ethekewini Municipality is also looking at maximizing the use of open space and creating awareness by promoting growing of vegetables on flat rooftops. In addition, the Municipality has grown vegetables in front of its City Hall.

The Ethekewini Municipality has also implementing a programme around getting schools involved in establishing vegetable and fruit gardens. This will have the added benefit of stimulating interest and getting communities involved.

Reducing the carbon footprint is also a focus of the Municipality. This includes the reforestation project at Buffelsdraai, as well as the rooftop initiatives mentioned earlier.

The Ethekewini Municipality has also created an Energy Office which has procured international donor funding and has several projects scheduled. However, projects already undertaken, include a booklet on energy saving measures, solar water heating, LED street lighting, and several workshops with key industries, such as the hotel industry, to demonstrate to them how they could save on electricity usage.

It is estimated that 35% of the population of KZN is food insecure and this exacerbated by the escalating food prices. There are 3.5 million people in KwaZulu-Natal who are need of an intervention to enhance their food security. Accordingly, the KZN Province has assembled a Task Team on Food Security which has drawn up an integrated plan. To start this project, the Province launched the 'One Home One Garden' campaign last month in Umbumbulu in Durban to mark the Province's focus on food security. This project is aimed at encouraging communities to grow vegetables to feed themselves and their families. However, at first food parcels will be used as a temporary measure whilst the more sustainable forms of assistance take off. As part of this process interested people will be given identity documents and enrolled into agricultural co-operatives. Seeds and further development programmes will also be provided at no cost. This campaign will then be extended to become the 'One Home, One Garden One Tree' campaign. Through this campaign all the people of the KwaZulu-Natal will be encouraged to create a garden in every home.

10. CONCLUSION

At the end of the day, achieving all of the above is still underpinned by getting the basics right and ensuring the sustainability of our cities. We still have to ensure good collection rates to fund the expenditure involved in creating a conducive environment for business and job creation, thus alleviating inequality and poverty. We still need to ensure tight fiscal management, stable financial systems and implementation of austerity measures to survive the current economic recession. We still need to ensure that we do not have cash flow problems and

can meet our financial obligations. We still have to ensure clean audit reports and good credit ratings to facilitate borrowings needed to meet some of the expenditure required for poverty alleviation. We still have to ensure that we do more with less. Accordingly, we as financial practitioners have a great obligation towards to the poor of our country. We have the ability and the opportunity to change their lives. **What a great legacy we would leave behind if we could achieve our target of halving poverty in this country by 2014.** Accordingly, it is up to you to reflect and ask yourself this question: **“Am I doing enough to alleviate poverty in my city?”**

For example, a report in the Citizen dated 10 September 2009 provided that according to the Auditor General only three out of 283 municipalities have their books in order, namely Cape Town, eThekweni and Johannesburg. This means that only 1% of local government has a clean bill of health. This has a huge impact on 99% of local government in terms of their ability to borrow effectively, especially in the current times where financial institutions are very tight with granting loans at effective rates. Accordingly, I repeat the question: **“Are you doing enough to alleviate poverty in your city?”**

We also need to get back to basics with regard to rural areas and agriculture by promoting and supporting:

- Subsistence farming and smallholder farming
- Cost effective infrastructure and equipment to support such farming, such as rain harvesting, free composting, free seeds/seedlings, wind and solar power, technical expertise
- Soybean as a means of alleviating poverty in Africa
- Food forests
- Food banks
- Aquaculture
- Soup kitchens
- Biodigesters

- Support provincial initiatives such as the “One Home One Garden One Tree” projects

The aim to provide the poor with at least one meal a day and some decent work should be supported by the following initiatives :-

- Supporting the EPWP
- Creating a conducive environment for business, including the cost of doing business
- Skills development through learnerships and apprenticeships
- Making it easier to start and do business
- Ensuring productivity of all staff through performance management
- Ensuring sustainability, innovation and value add
- Energy efficiency
- Reducing the carbon footprint

Other initiatives can include:-

- Facilitating the provision of alternate forms of medication, such as traditional African medication and Ayurveda

In conclusion, there is a Russian proverb that says, “**If everyone gives one thread, the poor will have a shirt.**” Accordingly, if each one of us puts in a passionate effort in our own jobs, we can each contribute towards poverty alleviation in this country in our own small way.

We all must remember how Madiba and our leaders fought and led the struggle against apartheid. The success of that struggle depended on all South Africans participating. **It was a struggle for equality and a better way of life.** It was a **struggle against poverty and hunger.** That struggle is not yet over for the majority of our people. For them to win that struggle, everyone must be prepared to contribute. This time you are not being asked to sacrifice in terms of facing jail or detention. No, are now being asked to **create a garden to feed one person**

who is hungry. That will change the future of many children. Let us give them that **hope of a better future.** Let us ensure that there is a **happy ending to Anele Xulu's story.** Her fate lies in our hands.

Thank you.