The topic is “exploring exit opportunities for CWP beneficiaries through LED”.

It is a great Honour for me to be part of this prestigious event, where we will be sharing best practices on how Local Economic Development has a potential to contribute to exit opportunities for CWP participants.

The Community Work Programme is one of the programmes that promote local economic activity in poor communities.

The CWP is a South African government programme that was designed to contribute to the strategic goals of government in addressing the triple challenges faced by the country, namely poverty, unemployment and inequality.

The CWP provides a safety net, basic income as well as work experience through work opportunities. The
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programme targets poor and unemployed people living in marginalised areas where, employment opportunities are not easily accessible.

We implement the programme through implementing agents who recruit participants from poor households.

The CWP has a footprint in all municipalities. Currently there are 279 340 participants in the programme.

The participants do useful work for 2 days a week within their communities. The useful work is structured in four pillars which include the:

1. Social sector (Early childhood development, Home based Care etc.)
The topic is “exploring exit opportunities for CWP beneficiaries through LED”.

2. **Environmental sector** (food gardens, greening through planting of trees, clean up campaigns etc)

3. **Economic sector** (cooperatives on brick making, plumbing, piggery, bakery etc)

4. **Infrastructure sector** (filling potholes; sweeping streets, cleaning streams and cleaning storm water drainage, and fixing broken taps and leaking pipes).

The CWP also aims to contribute to the development of community assets and services. It also strengthens community development approaches and stimulates local economic development in marginalised areas thus enhancing dignity and promoting social and economic inclusion.
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The strength of the programme is through the establishment of partnerships with various sectors because the useful work implemented by the participants is cross cutting.

The partnerships which have been established by the CWP are aimed at improving project outcomes and identifying exit opportunities for the participants.

Partnerships that have been established to facilitate exit opportunities include:

1. **Partnership with the department of Small Business Development** which has provided training and registered cooperatives in Gauteng and Free State CWP sites. In Gauteng at the Erasmus
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1. The site, 300 CWP participants have been trained and 27 cooperatives have been registered mainly focussing on Agriculture, brick laying, arts and culture beadwork, Leather bags and sewing.

2. The Department of Small Business has also trained 60 CWP participants at Maluti a Phofung. The cooperatives there include piggery, bakery, sewing, food gardens etc.

3. The produce is sold to local communities in the surrounding area.

4. These cooperatives now require financial support for them to be able to expand their scale of production, thus enabling the participants to generate sustainable income and to be able to exit from the CWP
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5. Through the partnership with the Department of Small Business we are collaborating to explore financing opportunities to support the expansion.

6. There are also cooperatives at Senqu in the Eastern Cape. These cooperatives include pig farming, agriculture and sewing.

7. Another partnership established is with the City of Reggio Emilia in Italy. The Ambassador of Italy was scheduled to participate at this LED conference, unfortunately he is not able to be with us today due to ill health.

8. The DCoG hosted a delegation from Reggio Emilia, in that past weeks, where they have committed to work with the DCoG in supporting exit opportunities for CWP participants through
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supporting cooperatives and providing capacity building to ensure that the cooperatives do not collapse but remain sustainable.

9. In Maluti a Phofung, there is a partnership with the Department of Health where participants have been trained and are assisting at the clinics to check patients for diseases such as HIV and AIDS, High Blood pressures and sugar diabetes. The partnership is aimed at exiting the participants to be health practioners.

10. Another best practice for exiting the participants is through a partnership with the North West University, where 75 participants with matric from KZN, FS and NW province were trained by the university to be Grade R Teachers. This year is
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their final year and soon we will proudly produced qualified Grade R Teachers to be placed at rural schools through a partnership with the Department of Basic Education.

11. The latest partnership that we are exploring is the one of empowering the Khoisan in the Northern Cape, who have been marginalised during the apartheid era. We aim to recruit them into the CWP, where we will identify useful work relevant to their unique circumstances, and we will support them to stimulate economic activity within their communities.

Honourable guests, and dignitaries, we are highly honoured to be part of this gathering where
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together we can endeavour to plough back to disadvantaged communities by adopting strategies to stimulate local economic development and to better the lives of our people.

I Thank you.