

**ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR SPORT, ARTS  
AND CULTURE LIMPOPO, MRS. H.J  
MASHAMBA, AT THE EVENT OF THE IFA  
LETHU "CREATIVE HANDS INCUBATOR"  
LAUNCH, NGOVU.**

**29<sup>th</sup> August 2011**

**Programme Director;**

**Members of the Provincial Legislature here  
present;**

**The Mayor of Greater Giyani Municipality,  
Cllr. M.P Hlungwani;**

**Hosi Ngove and other esteemed traditional  
leaders;**

**The General Manager of ABSA CSI, Ms.  
Mihloti Mathye;**

**Members of the Business Fraternity;**

**Religious leaders and leaders of chapter  
nine institutions;  
Members of the Media;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;  
Comrades and Friends;  
All protocol observed.**

It is occasions such as this one, that proves that as South Africans, we are blessed not only with an abundance of creative talent, but with people and structures who care to unearth, encourage and educate this talent. It is an active example of the caring and nurturing nature and of the national pride and patriotism, that we as South Africans have! It is also a shining example of the interest that the global community is taking in the activities and the wellbeing of South Africa's creative industries.

In short, it is proof that, working together, we can do more to unearth and support our local artists and crafters and together, we can do more to protect and promote our heritage!

Programme Director

It is an indisputable fact that a huge backlog still exists in the support and training of our artists and creative industries in Limpopo, caused by years of hardship, isolation and lack of recognition of artists across the cultural landscape of South Africa. It is not a situation that can be ignored or regarded as a lesser problem, as the people of especially Limpopo have the ability, drive and creativity to turn their talent into sustainable livelihoods. We are therefore thankful for any initiatives that lead to the addressing of this backlog, as well as to empower and encourage the youth in this regard.

In this month of August – Women’s Month - we celebrate the strength of the women of South Africa and also take time to reflect on where we are in terms of gender issues and the welfare of especially women in rural areas and disadvantaged communities. They are the ones we have in mind when referring to the possibilities of turning creativity into livelihood, taking note of the colourful and imaginative designs that flow from their hands.

When we plan to turn their innovation into productivity, we draw inspiration from the greatest women in the history of this country, such as Charlotte Maxeke, who saw infinite abilities in the youth and women of South Africa and understood the need to support them in their ventures.

Programme Director

Knowledge is power and we will continue to empower our people in the vast possibilities of making their own money and caring for their families. It is especially in this regard that *Ifa Lethu* delivers an indispensable service to the people of Limpopo, through their training and workshops. Indeed – the doors of learning and culture have been opened, as far as the aspirations of the Freedom Charter goes!

Further to this, initiatives such as the “Creative Hands Incubator” is aiding in creating jobs and alleviating poverty - something which is an urgent priority for government, but has clearly become a passion for individuals and organisations, such as *Ifa Lethu*. It further is heart warming to note the role of our business fraternity in this regard and the vital funding of this specific project, by ABSA.

This generosity of supporting the people who support them has much to do with the caring nature of our people I alluded to earlier and a marked indication of a financial institution with the welfare of the people of South Africa at heart. May this dynamic relationship go from strength to strength.

In closure, Programme Director

Occasions such as this one, gives us the rare opportunity to give recognition where it is due. It truly is an honour to be part of today's activities and we wish to encourage *Ifa Lethu* to keep up the good work.

We hope to see their activities continue to enrich the lives of the people of Limpopo. May many more individuals and institutions draw inspiration from your successes, to form their own partnerships and find workable solutions to address the economical and social problems of this Province. On behalf of the people of Limpopo, we thank you for this initiative and for your continued efforts to promote and protect the heritage of this Province, because indeed, the people of Limpopo are a tangible part of our living heritage. You are a shining example of the spirit of ubuntu!

Thank you for restoring the dignity of our people, by creating opportunities for them to learn, be creative, exhibit the fruits of their labour and benefit from it!

I thank you!

