



Roads and farming projects for Msinga

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THE KwaZulu-Natal government is pumping in millions of rand to uplift one of the province's most poverty-stricken and under-developed areas, Msinga.

One of the projects in the pipeline is a farming programme that will give a job to one person per household for 24 months.

"We will expect the person to spend at least half of the salary helping members of his or her household," said Mjikijelwa Dlamini, the chairperson of Msinga Peace and Development Committee.

In addition the Department of Transport has set aside R40m to rebuild Ingubevu bridge in Msinga.

"The minister and his team were here last week to announce this project to the community," Dlamini, who is also an advisor to the six chiefs in the area, said.

He added: "We are committed to

delivering services. More programmes will begin in earnest from the end of this month."

He said the committee was also working with the National Empowerment Fund (NEF) and the Department of Trade and Industry to improve the lives of the people.

The province's department of rural development and land affairs has also lined up several other projects, including cattle and goat farming, which will give impetus to job creation and income generation in Msinga.

Transport Department spokesperson Kwanele Ncalane said: "Msinga is one of the poorest areas in the province and it has been earmarked for development for some time now. It is not only the bridge that will be constructed but we will fix major roads too."

Dlamini said the reconstruction of the bridge, which was damaged by rains,

would be a boon for the community because their movement and transport were severely hampered by poor road conditions.

The IFP has long dominated Msinga, and controls 18 of the 19 wards there. The ANC has just one ward under its control but has prioritised the area's development following a call by President Jacob Zuma.

Dlamini said: "It shows that political parties have matured, even though there is still some political tension as the local government elections draw closer. The emergence of the National Freedom Party has added another dimension in uMsinga's political landscape."

The ANC's Bhekinkosi Mvelase claimed the ANC had made serious inroads in the IFP-dominated wards. "The elections will show how far our party has come. We will do much better than in previous polls," said Mvelase.