



## GWEBINDLALA!

a partnership between Government and Civil Society to  
Create Jobs, Promote Shared Growth and  
Build Social Capital for Development

### VILLAGE ACCESS ROADS PROGRAMME

connecting communities to markets  
with labour intensive methods

- Increasing the job creation, local economic growth and skills development impact of government's public works programme, to support sustainable livelihoods and shared growth.
- Developing social capital and sustainable businesses by prioritising the involvement of organised communities, households and local small business contractors and suppliers in programme delivery.
- Training and skills development.
- Developing practical partnerships between NGOs, CBOs and government.
- Strengthening the EPWP approach, particularly in labour intensive roads construction and upgrading, and municipal capacity to manage such programmes.
- Strengthening policy and improving implementation guidelines for rural village access road programmes.



## Maximising the shared growth impact of the MIG rural roads programme

Rural roads, particularly in former homeland areas, are in a serious state of neglect. There is therefore an urgent need to accelerate the delivery of municipal and provincial roads programmes. Unfortunately the drive to spend budgets often leads to municipalities opting to take the traditional approach to civil engineering contracts, using large contractors who employ as much local labour as possible, in line with EPWP principles. This approach generally does speed up delivery, but it does not offer much in the way of economic benefits to the beneficiary communities – most of the benefits go to the urban based contractor and materials suppliers.

The Mvula approach maximises the “cents in the Rand” that stay in the community and our approach does not compromise unreasonably on speed of delivery. We achieve this through three complementary strategies:

- We employ community members at all levels of delivery at village level, from unskilled labour, to artisans, supervisors, component makers, plant operators, operation & maintenance trainers, storekeepers, project administrators and project steering committee members. Many of the skills learned in this process enable those trained to get jobs after the end of the project.
- We ensure that as many components as possible are manufactured locally, such as concrete blocks, culvert and causeway pipes and gabion baskets. Local manufacture of components involves a high level of participation of women.
- We source other components and materials, such as river sand, gabion stones and cement, as well as the local transport of these materials, as close to the village as possible, while keeping prices competitive.



## Developing social capital

Our approach is cost effective because we empower CBOs to co-manage projects. This also has a significant impact on raising the level of confidence and pride of community leaders, which has numerous spin-offs in terms of follow-up development projects that such leaders are able to leverage through their increased knowledge and networks with local government and other development role players. Our objective is to not only build infrastructure and skills, but social capital as well, so that communities can participate actively in their own development and not be totally dependent on government.

## Mobilising Civil Society for delivery and development

The Mvula *Gwebindlala!* approach is a powerful alliance of two key civil society role players in development, namely NGOs and CBOs. Mvula brings the people-centred approach, altruism and competence in community-based development of an NGO, while the CBOs we mobilise, train and support act as catalysts for mobilising the communities they represent, and form very effective partnerships with the municipalities responsible for service delivery programmes. Government's delivery capacity is thus increased on a sustainable basis.

At the same time capacitated CBOs strengthen existing mechanisms for articulating the voice of the community in engaging with municipalities. Rural village access road programmes implemented by Mvula thus strengthen the relationship between municipalities and communities.

## SMME development

A key feature of Mvula's approach to rural road construction and maintenance is the capacity building of local entrepreneurs and co-operatives to provide services, under the supervision of larger and more experienced companies. Included in the budget of each pilot project is funding for start-up equipment, training and mentorship of SMMEs to create sustainable businesses.

## Training and skills development

Accredited training will be provided to all community members carrying out semi-skilled and skilled tasks, in line with EPWP principles. This includes SMME development, as noted above.

An important element of skills development will be the training of independent road maintenance contractors, responsible for maintaining defined stretches of road, under contract to the municipality and supervised by village committees accountable to Ward Committees.

## Strengthening policy and implementation guidelines for labour based road construction

The *Gwebindlala!* Village Access Roads Programme will generate ongoing lessons to strengthen the MIG roads programme and the EPWP approach. Mvula will seek to strengthen our collaborative relationship with **dplg**, the Dept of Public Works and the Dept of Transport, to ensure that this happens.

## Programme implementation and costing

Mvula's *Gwebindlala!* Village Access Roads Programme is about adding value to existing MIG, PIG and DoT funded low volume rural roads projects. It thus involves funding to complement the above funding streams, for the following:

### Pilot and Gear-up Phase (2 years)

This phase is necessary in order for Mvula to gear up the capacity required for a full scale programme in a number of provinces. It will include the following:

- Agree draft implementation policy & guidelines with client
- Select pilot project sites and build stakeholder support
- Set up funding arrangements, with capital funding provided by municipalities from MIG
- Develop accredited training courses and materials
- Start pilot projects in at least 5 sites in the 5 poorest provinces within 6 months
- Implement pilot projects, to include:
  - mobilisation and training of village project committees to mobilise communities and co-manage projects
  - skills training and capacity building (building of stream crossings and storm water culverts, project administration, road maintenance, etc)
  - support to village committees to recruit and supervise labour
  - support to village committees to set up maintenance systems with individuals on contract for specified stretches of road
- Document and disseminate lessons
- Fine tune implementation policies and guidelines

The cost of each pilot project will vary considerably, depending on the time taken to build each road, which is a function of the length of each.

### Scaling up and Roll-out Phase

This phase will begin towards the end of the pilot phase. Key tasks will be:

- Expand programmes in pilot municipalities
- Support roll-out in other municipalities
- Support lessons learning, dissemination, advocacy

- Expand programme from direct implementation to providing support to municipalities and their implementing agencies to set up and implement projects
- Continue documentation and dissemination of experiences and advocacy of approaches

The cost of this phase will depend on the scale of each project.

## The Mvula Trust's *Gwebindlala!* initiative

### Objectives and Key Features:

- Increasing the job creation, local economic growth and skills development impact of government's basic services delivery programmes in rural and peri-urban areas, to support sustainable livelihoods and shared growth
- Developing social capital and sustainable businesses by prioritising the involvement of organised communities, households and local small business contractors and suppliers in programme delivery
- Training and skills development
- Developing practical partnerships between NGOs, CBOs and government
- Strengthening the EPWP approach, particularly in the MIG Programme, and government capacity to manage programmes
- Strengthening policy and improving implementation guidelines

### Programmes:

- Basic **sanitation**, as part of the MIG Programme
- Household-based **food gardening** using rainwater harvesting tanks
- Rural **access roads** linking communities to the formal network, also part of MIG
- **Solid waste** removal and disposal

### Role Players:

- **Political, administrative and funding responsibilities:** Municipalities and national and provincial government departments
- **Implementers:** Mvula, other NGOs and organised communities
- **Contractors:** CBOs, local artisans, local small businesses

## The Mvula Trust: a key development NGO and government partner

Mvula has been in existence for 14 years and has made a major contribution to the development of the water and sanitation sector in South Africa. We have successfully facilitated community based sanitation delivery in 31 municipalities, to a value of over R200m over the last five years. Since its establishment, Mvula has worked with village water and sanitation committees and their municipalities to provide over 750,000 people with a basic level of water supply and over 500,000 with improved sanitation and health.

Mvula is not only a major player in service delivery, however. Although most of our work has indeed been in establishing community based project delivery models, with a strong job creation emphasis, and implementing large programmes, we only seek to complement government efforts. Increasingly we are involved in initiatives to enhance the capacity of other service providers and of local government itself, to accelerate service delivery, and to promote the developmental impact of water supply, sanitation and related programmes.

With our considerable experience with community based service delivery and substantial existing capacity to undertake policy, advocacy and programme support work, Mvula believes that we can make a contribution at large scale to the following:

- Contributing to the Asgi-SA objectives with the emphasis on the **'shared' component of growth**. We believe that this sharing of economic development gains implies improving livelihoods in poor communities and water and sanitation are closely linked to such a goal.
- Supporting greater involvement of development NGOs and CBOs in implementing government poverty eradication programmes, by partnering with them and **transferring skills and experience**.
- Supporting local government in rolling out **community based sanitation programmes**. In this respect Mvula can add much greater value than through only acting as a project manager on individual projects.
- Through using our experience with community based projects to support the EPWP in achieving its objectives in the **infrastructure sector**.
- Supporting the MIG programme to ensure that developmental gains are devolved to local communities both in terms of building community **capacity to manage village scale infrastructure** and in creating jobs outside urban centres.
- Supporting DWAF to pilot cost effective and sustainable models for poor rural households to ensure **household food security** through food gardening using rainwater harvesting reservoirs, and scaling up this model with funding from diverse government and corporate sources.