

NGOS PLEAD FOR FUNDING

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Neo Mvubu

NGOs pleaded to government for funding when they held discussions with the Deputy Minister of Social Development Maria Ntuli and MEC Sisi Ntombela in Bloemfontein on Wednesday.

At the meeting, Ntuli and Ntombela heard about this factor and others the NGO representatives outlined.

In a document, the ministry said NGOs contributed R9.3bn to the economic growth of the country in 2008 and that the amount had increased to R12.5bn.

According to Ntuli, the challenge faced by NGOs is mainly lack of infrastructure. Ntuli said the organisations tended to work in isolation from one another while there was a need for integration between the urban and rural organisations.

“We visited both the white and black NGOs and what we saw was that many of the organisations work in isolation from each other.

“We came to the realisation that the rural ones need training,” she said.

Ntuli said all the challenges raised in the dialogue would be presented in a summit to be held next month where resolutions would be made regarding the problems raised.

The main issue raised by the NGOs was the slow pace in which government transferred money to the organisations. They said that many of the workers in the organisations still received stipends, even after years of volunteering. The groups said it was time their staff were given salaries by government.

Ntuli recently visited Emelia Active Learning Centre, which deals with children with disabilities and Boichucho Old Age Home in Bloemfontein.

The second day of the dialogue was dedicated to discussions where the organisations said financial support remained a major challenge for them to continue their duties.

Other challenges raised were that the registration of NGOs took long and that feedback took even longer to get to the applicants.

The groups requested that ordinary people be involved in the policy planning until the implementation process and that governing bodies needed to be formed to ensure the functionality of the NGOs.

According to MEC Ntombela, there were about 44000 organisations in the province and of those, government only supported 1433.

Ntombela said the department had spent R163m on NGOs and that other departments should help support the organisations financially.

In 2010 welfare organisations took the government to court to demand increased funding.

[Source: www.thenewage.co.za]