

22 April 2026

Deputy Minister Speaker Notes for Contractor Development Roadshow
East London, 24 April 2026

Opening: Purpose of the Roadshow

We are here today to drive a process of meaningful development. This is about ensuring that infrastructure delivery in our country is not only about building roads, schools, and facilities, but about building people, businesses, and sustainable livelihoods.

Our responsibility is to ensure that infrastructure becomes a true instrument for inclusive economic growth. It must uplift communities, support emerging contractors, and create jobs at scale.

The Role of the Construction Sector in job creation

The construction sector remains one of the most powerful levers we have to respond to unemployment, inequality, and uneven economic participation. It is through this sector that we translate policy into real, visible impact in the lives of our people.

The Reality We Must Confront

We must be honest about the reality we are facing. Despite years of contractor development interventions, many emerging contractors remain unable to grow beyond the lower cidb grades. Progression remains limited and access to meaningful opportunities is still constrained.

According to the recent cidb Construction Monitor, data confirms that while transformation has progressed at entry level, it declines significantly at higher levels of the industry. Black ownership is as high as 69 percent in Grades 2 to 4, but drops to just over 50 percent at Grade 9, where the largest and most complex projects are delivered (cidb Construction Monitor, 2026).

More concerning is that black-owned contractors are accessing only about 45 percent of public sector contract value, while women-owned enterprises account for just 15 percent (cidb Construction Monitor, 2026). At the highest level of the industry, black-owned contractors account for only 20 percent of contract awards, and women-owned enterprises only 10 percent (cidb Construction Monitor, 2026).

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This tells us clearly that participation alone is not enough. The real challenge is ensuring access to opportunities at scale and enabling contractors to grow into higher levels of the industry.

A Structured Government Response

This is why a more deliberate and structured approach is required.

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, together with the Construction Industry Development Board, is implementing the National Contractor Development Framework to ensure that contractor development is coordinated, standardised, and focused on long-term sustainability.

This framework is designed to support real progression, particularly for women, youth, persons with disabilities and emerging contractors, and to ensure that development is directly linked to opportunities.

Driving Development Through Procurement and Skills Integration

This work is strengthened through the cidb B.U.I.L.D Programme, which embeds development directly within procurement processes.

Through the B.U.I.L.D Fund, the Enterprise Development Standard, and the Skills Development Standard, infrastructure projects are used as a tool to drive both contractor growth and skills development.

Our message to all infrastructure clients, particularly within the Public Works sector, is clear. Compliance with the B.U.I.L.D Programme is non-negotiable.

We are accelerating the implementation of the B.U.I.L.D Programme across infrastructure clients as a key lever for enterprise and skills development. This ensures that development is not treated as an add-on, but as a core requirement of infrastructure delivery.

Client capacitation sessions are currently being rolled out across all nine provinces to support the effective implementation the B.U.I.L.D Programme.

A key component of this work is the rollout of Construction Management Systems training, which forms part of the B.U.I.L.D Programme's broader skills development approach.

To date, 357 contractors have been trained, with a target of reaching 1,000 contractors in this financial year. These graduates were recognised at the 2025 National Construction Summit, with further graduates to be recognised today.

This training leads to SANS 1393 certification and equips contractors with structured systems to manage construction risks, improve performance, and deliver greater value to clients. It strengthens key areas such as health and safety, quality management, and environmental compliance.

Importantly, this training is being delivered through partnerships with higher education institutions. The cidb has signed Memoranda of Understanding with institutions such as the University of the Free State and the

University of Johannesburg, and we are proud to highlight the recent launch of the iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu Centre of Excellence.

Together, these Centres of Excellence will serve as key delivery hubs for Construction Management Systems training, which is fully funded by the cidb. This ensures that contractors are able to access high-quality, industry-aligned training and receive credible, verifiable certification without financial barriers.

In addition, the Skills Development Standard is being implemented across infrastructure projects, with a target of reaching 3,000 beneficiaries in 2026.

The Contractor Development Outreach Programme is also progressing across provinces, with today's session in the Eastern Cape forming part of this national rollout.

This integrated approach ensures that contractor development is practical, structured, and directly linked to real opportunities in the market. It is not only about meeting standards, but about building sustainable, competitive businesses that can grow and participate meaningfully in higher-value projects.

Strategic Partnerships for Regional Development

In February 2026, the cidb signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding with the Coega Development Corporation.

This partnership focuses on accelerating transformation in the construction sector while strengthening the capacity of SMMEs. It aligns contractor development with real infrastructure opportunities within the Coega Special Economic Zone, which spans over 9,000 hectares.

The collaboration supports skills development, enterprise growth, and improved access to projects. It also recognises the importance of contractor grading in tender participation and ensures that contractors are better positioned to meet these requirements.

This partnership demonstrates how coordinated interventions can unlock regional economic development and create sustainable opportunities for contractors.

From Engagement to Real Opportunities

This Roadshow is designed to move beyond discussion and into action. It provides a platform for contractors to access real opportunities, engage directly with stakeholders, and gain visibility into the infrastructure project pipeline.

This afternoon, during the Infrastructure Project Opportunities session, you will hear directly from key institutions that are central to infrastructure delivery.

These include the Office of the Premier, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), SANRAL, Infrastructure South Africa (ISA), the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure in the Eastern Cape, and the Eastern

Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism where various speakers will provide insights on project pipelines, tendering processes, and how contractors can better position themselves to access opportunities.

We encourage you to engage actively in this session. This is where information meets opportunity.

Online Contractor Support Platform

Importantly, we are also introducing an Online Contractor Support Platform. This is a simple, mobile-friendly system that allows contractors to raise questions, lodge complaints in real time during and after the Roadshow.

Today, we are moving beyond listening. We are putting in place a system that ensures that contractor challenges are tracked, escalated, and resolved.

Through this platform, contractors will be able to report issues related to payments delays, procurement issues, project implementation, cidb services challenges, access to opportunities, and training support.

Each issue will be reviewed, escalated to the relevant department, and tracked through to resolution. Feedback will be communicated directly to the contractor, with escalation to national level where required.

This intervention strengthens accountability and reinforces the coordination role of the cidb in addressing systemic challenges faced by contractors.

A Coordinated Support Ecosystem

This Roadshow brings together government, state-owned entities, development finance institutions, and academic partners to support contractors across the full value chain.

This is about building an ecosystem that works. It is about ensuring that contractors are supported not only to participate, but to succeed and grow sustainably.

Call to Action

We encourage all participants to engage fully, make use of the Online Contractor Support Platform, connect with stakeholders, and take advantage of the opportunities presented today.

Closing

Let us work together to build a construction industry that is inclusive, competitive, and capable of delivering for all South Africans, turning South Africa into a construction site.

I thank you!