

# Working for the nation

## The role of constituency offices



*By Andries Stemela*

The establishment of the ANC Parliamentary Constituency Offices, which are located in all nine provinces, was a deliberate effort to ensure effective and direct accountability to the people by public representatives.

All ANC Parliamentary Constituency Office staff is part of the ANC Caucus Support Services and is accountable to the ANC Chief Whip. The offices play a vital role in providing both efficient and effective administrative support to Members of Parliament.

Critically, Constituency Offices serve as centers of information on government programmes.

They also serve as a link to government in an attempt to extend programmes of direct contact and communication in order to empower people to become their own liberators and to be active participants in an effort to build a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.

This is informed by the organisation's vision to establish a well resourced Constituency Support Unit in the Caucus aimed at contributing to the mobilization of the people to take part in the process of their complete self liberation from the legacy of colonialism and apartheid.

The mission of the ANC in parliament is striving to develop and maintain systems that enable Public Representatives at all three spheres of Government, to have dynamic contact with the people of our country.

The constituency work also includes capacitating all Parliamentary Constituency Offices to provide generic service to the people; and operate like advisory offices.

The central theme of the constituency work entails "Taking Parliament to the People". It is in this vein that constituency office staff are encouraged to have co-operative relationships not only with ANC and Alliance structures, but also with Government Officials, NGO's, community-based organisations, organized Labour and Agencies that support small and medium sized businesses as well as job creation projects.

The ultimate goals of the constituency work includes integrating the work of MPs work, MPLs, and Councilors with the programme of the ANC as well as aligning Parliament's oversight work with those of the organisation's constituency work. 

