



Wrapping up the Women's Month KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Finance Nomusa Dube-Ncube said more research by women aimed at alleviate the plight of other women should be prioritised by government, academia, industries and non-governmental organisations.

Dube-Ncube was speaking at the Moses Kotane Institute-organised Women in Research Dialogue where she delivered the keynote address. The Leader of Government Business said Moses Kotane Institute of Technology has in the past created many critical platforms for the exchange of ideas with the institution also releasing reports that have been very instrumental in guiding Government Programme of Action.

"It is critical how that as a government, academia, industries and non-governmental organisations we play our meaningful role. The dearth in research, especially by women is intertwined with lack of research funding. It's one thing to call for more African women researchers and another to put the money where our mouths are," she said.

The MEC said proper and life-changing research was expensive to conduct and that it requires financial resources, support and critical input.

"The KwaZulu-Natal Government realised this gap and challenge which led to the birth of the Moses Kotane Institute. I am proud that such a glorious institution is led by a strong women whose passion transcends the duty of their office," she said.

"Many women especially in rural areas have problems with mobility. Technology provides an opportunity for them to be economically active without having to deal with the challenges of mobility. I am well aware that the Department of Higher Education pumps funding to our institutes of higher learning, however, I am not happy that much of that funding does not go to research, if it were, we would not be having such acute lack of research produced by African women. Another trend we should be frowning upon is that research funding must not only go to a selected few individuals, but must be allocated equitably so that it beneficiates our women," she said.

Dube-Ncube said the government was in serious need of research to drive up its programmes of action. She added that the government was focusing on programmes to enhance the skills and knowledge of the not only of our public servants, but our stakeholders whose input in government's daily work ought to be informed by thorough research.

"It should be a key strategy of this entity, MKI, that the scarce skills we have in research and digitally-driven programmes are prioritized. This is in particular if we want to ensure that the research programmes and their impact are also taken to previously disadvantaged communities especially those residing in township and rural areas," she said.

Dube-Ncube said an array of other research areas need to be prioritised and women catered for in them. She said these are areas of research to enhance economic growth.

“We need research by women that will support KZN priority sectors like agro-processing, ICT and innovation, industrial development, manufacturing, value addition and beneficiation. This should go with research on how to improve global competitiveness of KZN companies many of whom are led by our distinguished women,” she said.

Dube-Ncube said there was an urgent need to delve on research focusing on strategies to modernise the KwaZulu-Natal economy and how it can develop smart cities in the province while increasing the depth of technology for value addition and beneficiation by women for women.

“Women-led research should grapple with empowerment models to deal with inequalities in societies while also rebuilding social cohesion in KwaZulu-Natal,” he said.

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