Welcome Address By the President of IMFO:- Women’s Seminar
Durban 8 March 2016

SJ Masite, CMIIA, CFE, FIISA
IMFO PRESIDENT
DMM:IA Emfuleni Municipality.
Thank you Program Director

- IMFO Vice President, Chairperson of SCE, Board members present, Honourable Mayors, Speakers, Councillors, Municipal Managers, CFO’s Senior Managers and other Municipal Officials, SALGA’s PEO’s distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen, all protocol observed - it is my pleasure and privilege to welcome you to our historic 4th Women in Public Sector Seminar in one of the economic hub of the country.

- Program Director allow me to extend my gratitude to the Chairperson of the committee Louise Muller for her opening message and reflecting on what has been done in terms of the last year’s declarations or resolutions.
• This seminar comes at the time where the country faces serious economic challenges, hence our theme “Sustaining quality service delivery through prudent financial management.”

• As we gather here our objectives is to learn from each other on how can we continue to provide quality service delivery under the financial challenges that are facing our country and the world as whole.
Program Director allow me to echo the **Message by UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka on International Women's Day**

- “This year’s celebration of International Women’s Day is the first within the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are confidently asserted in that Agenda as intrinsic to progress.

- The new Agenda’s Sustainable Development Goals include a specific goal to achieve gender equality, which aims to end discrimination and violence against women and girls and ensure equal participation and opportunities in all spheres of life. Important provisions for women’s empowerment are also included in most of the other goals.”
In conjunction with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, more than 90 governments have answered UN Women’s call for action to “Step It Up for Gender Equality”.

• Heads of State and Government have pledged concrete and measurable actions to crack some of the fundamental barriers to the achievement of gender equality in their countries.

• With these unprecedented expressions of political will, the countdown to substantive gender equality by 2030 must begin, accompanied and underpinned by monitoring of accountability and evaluation of progress.

• The strength is drawn from this solidarity as facing the world events such as severe population displacement, extreme violence against women and girls, and extensive instability and crises in many regions.
To arrive at the future we want, we cannot leave anyone behind. We have to start with those who are the least regarded. These are largely women and girls, although in poor and troubled areas, they can also include boys and men.

On International Women’s Day, we reiterate the greater participation of women as one of the necessary conditions for an inclusive Agenda 2030.

Their leadership is insufficiently recognized but must emerge with greater participation in decision-making bodies. Each one of us is needed—in our countries, communities, organizations, governments and in the United Nations—to ensure decisive, visible and measurable actions are taken under the banner: **Planet 50-50: Step It Up for Gender Equality.**
• Ladies and gentlemen as IMFO we are rallying behind the United Nations in the Planet representation on 50-50: ‘Step It Up for Gender Equality’ when you look at our IMFO the Board composition and Staff complement we have already reached the 50-50 representation the issue here is maintaining this standard.

• Ladies and Gentlemen I think it is important to flag on what IMFO vision and mission is which is to be recognised as a professional body for the development and promotion of municipal finance and governance practitioners in the public sector, IMFO is here to create platform for you to network and interact with your fellow women colleagues, in order to make change in your area of work....

• This reminds me of Inspirational words of Oprah Winfrey"The big secret in life is that there is no big secret. Whatever your goal, you can get there if you're willing to work."
Program Director it is also important to reflect on Our Mission which is

- To provide, within the statutory framework, effective financial accounting advice, as well as setting and maintaining high financial standards and controls in public finance and governance, to all levels of government and stakeholders, to benefit the community.

- Remember “Life has no remote, let’s get up and change it ourselves” **We need to become quality and change leaders in order to sustain quality service delivery!** Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time, we are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek” Barack Obama
Ladies and gentlemen let me give you some food for thought
Let’s bring change by:

1st Developing a clear vision of our goals
• Exceptional managers build a mental blueprint that becomes the guiding vision, Born from instinct, it is simple, logically grounded and benefit-based. The focus is on adding lasting value to the communities we serve. Building the vision that enhances existing technologies and corporate strengths.
2nd Identifying critical success factors

- Exceptional managers focus on the vital factors that maintain their desired competitive stance. They evaluate specifics: What systems and technologies are needed to prevent negative outcomes and ensure that key benefits are produced for the municipality and the customer.
3rdly Implementing objective self-assessment

- Exceptional managers apply the bulk of available resources to the critical success factors and divert resources from less valuable areas. They also ruthlessly evaluate their own capacity to contribute directly and actively to these factors. They rely on the expertise of others to supplement their shortcomings.
4thly Selecting champions to drive the critical success factors
• Exceptional managers select a few key champions to manage existing systems and develop future ones. Their purpose is to guarantee the critical factors.

5thly Establishing monitoring and follow up systems
• Exceptional managers do not rely completely on staff or data input as the sole barometer of progress. Monitoring systems are as simple as the “walk around” check.
6th leadership focus

• Exceptional managers communicate goals, directions and ideas clearly and concisely throughout the organization, repeatedly and consistently. In the words of John Maxwell, “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way”.

• Ladies and Gentleman, this is also an opportunity for IMFO to play an important role in respect of capacitating public sector officers to meet their new challenges and in assisting municipalities realize their strategic priorities outlined in legislation.
Finally. I will always remember the words of our Tata Madiba when he said, “It always seems impossible until it’s done” And I am sure that we can rise to the occasion and shine brightly.

To our partner PWC we wouldn’t have made it if you were not there with us from the beginning when we held our first Women in Local Government Finance Seminar, To this day and going forward you are still here with us. Thank you so very much for your continuous support.

To our delegates thank you for your continuous participation, in the seminar we have reached our highest number of 200 distinguished women in attendance
Closing

• I also want to thank our sponsors namely, ARMS Audit, Auditor General, E4 Legal Studio and South African Institute of Learning.... thank you for all you for continuous support. It is greatly appreciated.

• Last not but not least I would like to sincerely thank the Key note speakers Mme Nomasondo Mazibuko and Mme Nomusa Dube, MEC’ for Local Governance and Traditional Affairs in KZN, for have taken their valuable times from their busy schedules to be here with us as IMFO we feel so much humbled and honoured.
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WAY FORWARD
• In conclusion, I would like to thank a small team of our staff in the IMFO Office especially the Acting CEO Ira Kotze. The Vice President, as the oversee of this committee, Chairperson and Members of SCE To all of you, I sincerely appreciate your work.

• Ladies and gentlemen as we will be engaging for the two days let’s think about these quotes-“Don’t wait for the perfect moment, take the moment and make it perfect”. Zoey Sayward

“If you can’t fly, then run, if you can’t run, then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.” These were the words of the great leader- “Martin Luther King JR “
With these few words I declare the Women Seminar officially open and to wish you a success in these two days. We must learn and network as far as possible, learning is a continuous process, you never cease learn so long you live. declared dead that’s my approach of life.

Thank you, Dankie, Siyabonga and enjoy the Seminar
Thank You For Your Attention