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Inter-ministerial committee, not municipal agent, should oversee Mvula Trust probe

An anonymous source has handed Corruption Watch the details of an investigation that Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Richard Baloyi plans to undertake into the awarding of tenders for the Community Work Programme (CWP), including that won by Mvula Trust.

Four months ago Corruption Watch gave Baloyi's department the findings of its own investigation into a R30-million tender won by Mvula Trust to manage the programme's implementation, involving distributing hundreds of millions of rands in wages to participants in the job-creation project.

Corruption Watch's own investigation uncovered significant irregularities in the awarding of the tender.

David Lewis, executive director of Corruption Watch, said: "While we welcome this news of the planned investigation, what is regrettable of course is that if the minister and the department had responded timeously to our investigation report, the hardship suffered by those workers on the Mvula sites – who were forced to take to the streets to secure their wages – may have been avoided."

He added: "We're also uncomfortable with the decision to give the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (Misa) responsibility to oversee the investigation."

Misa is a barely formed state entity that reports directly to Baloyi, whose ministry and department is a key subject of the investigation.

"Given this, we would have thought it more appropriate that this investigation should report to the inter-ministerial committee responsible for overseeing the Community Work Programme.

"This investigation should be conducted transparently, the outcome should be made public and consequences should flow from adverse findings. We will provide the inquiry with the fruits of our ongoing investigation," Lewis said.

For more information

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