



EPWP Bi-Weekly Bulletin

THE INCENTIVE GRANT IS PROVING TO BE A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AT ZULULAND DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

Article and Pictures by Sduduzo Simelane and Mziwakhe Radebe



On 02 December 2021, the EPWP Programme Manager, Mr Sduduzo Simelane together with Mr. Mziwakhe Radebe, the Deputy Director for Technical Support at the EPWP Unit of the Durban Regional Office, embarked on a public body visit at the Zululand District Municipality (ZDM) in the north of KwaZulu- Natal.

The objective of the visit was to check the project files as well as to verify the availability and validity of documents such as employment contracts, certified identity copies, attendance registers, proof of payment of wages, and, where applicable, declaration of disability.

While performing this task, these officials learnt from the ZDM EPWP Champion, Mr. Sanele Busane who had started as the EPWP participant in the Youth Jobs and Waste Programme at Mandeni Municipality, of the implementation of the ZDM Council Resolution taken in April 2021, which determined that EPWP participants be gradually absorbed into permanent employment within the Municipality as and when there are vacant positions and the participants possess minimum job requirements.

The Zululand District Municipality has been looking for strategies that will provide an exit avenue for EPWP workers and help the municipality to minimise the outsourcing of services. This has been the context of the Council Resolution which, in terms of the EPWP, involves three stages, namely, (i) recruitment as an EPWP worker using either the Integrated Grant (the municipality has been receiving in the order of R9 million in incentive grant over the last three years) or the ZDM's own equitable share; (ii) temporary absorption by the municipality and (iii) permanent absorption.

Although the decision is relatively new, the municipality has created a catalyst for sustainable livelihoods through the EPWP Incentive Grant by permanently employing 21 office cleaners (4 men and 17 women) who had started as incentive grant funded EPWP participants.

The benefits that come with being permanently employed are a far cry from the EPWP wage. These workers are now on the Zululand District Municipality's payroll system earning R8 600.00 a month with medical

aid, pension fund, housing allowance, 13th cheque, and leave benefits. In addition, they are now eligible to apply for study bursaries offered by the municipality.

Participants' testimonies

Ms Mbali Shandu comes from KwaSishwili in Ulundi where the main office of the District Municipality is located - the DM has satellite offices in all its Local Municipalities (Abaqulusi, Edumbe, Nongoma, Ulundi, and Uphongolo). She joined the EPWP in 2013 and got permanently absorbed in April 2021. Confirming that she now earns R8 600.00 a month, Ms Shandu said she "is now able to save". On the other hand, Ms Zanele Mdluli who hails from Emabedlane in Ulundi joined the EPWP in 2016. She added that "right now I am building myself a house", a clear benefit of being permanently employed.

Nonkululeko Nkosi comes from Nongoma and she participated in the EPWP in 2017 and has been paid R2 200 a month. Nkosi said that she has been renting accommodation in Ulundi from the days of her participating in the EPWP and the fact that she has become permanently employed has made a difference in terms of enabling her to meet her basic needs after paying her rent. She is also considering applying for the municipality's study bursary in the coming year.

Mr. Busane's advice to other municipalities which would like to emulate what has been done by the Zululand District Municipality is that 'ZDM has a fully-fledged EPWP organizational structure where the EPWP Champion sits on Management Meetings. "As the EPWP unit, we have our own meetings and one of the items on agenda is placement".

A supportive disposition of the Executive is also important. As Mr. Busane concludes he said "the culture here is that if you have qualifications and are well behaved you will be absorbed but we must also thank the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure for the Incentive Grant as it enables us to participate in this project".

All DPWI branches/units/offices are encouraged to use the official Request for Investigation Form to request the Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) under the Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) Branch to conduct an investigation regarding incidents of fraud, corruption, serious maladministration, etc. in the Department.

The form must be accompanied by a detailed memo to enable the ACU to make a determination on whether the matter is within the mandate of the Unit.

A copy of the official Request for Investigation Form is available on the Departmental Intranet.

Officials can also contact: Acting Deputy Director-General: Governance, Risk and Compliance **Mr. Lwazi Mahlangu** @012 406 1977 / Lwazi.mahlangu@dwp.gov.za; Director: Investigation **Mr. Matomo Mabotja** @012 406 1328 / matomo.mabotja@dwp.gov.za. You can also use TALK TO MINISTER/ TALK TO DEPUTY MINISTER/ TALK TO DIRECTOR-GENERAL on the DPWI Intranet.

EXTENSION OF SOSHANGUVE MAGISTRATES COURT EXPECTED TO PROVIDE NYS TRAINING TO 85 YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE COMMUNITY

Article by Michael Mokoena

A government project to extend the Soshanguve Magistrates Court building in Tshwane plans to utilise the National Youth Service (NYS) Programme to provide artisan skills to 85 young people from the community. This project – which is a partnership between the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development has already appointed 56 young people who are currently being trained through the NYS.

Although the 56 young people are currently being trained in the combination of bricklaying and upholstery trades, the plan is to provide training to a number of participants in the following trades: 30 Bricklaying, 25 Wood making (upholstery), 20 Electrical and Mechanical, 10 Security and Glazing.

The 56 young people who are currently receiving the training come from Soshanguve were appointed in accordance with the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Recruitment Guidelines. A total of 30 participants (young people) have already completed bricklaying, electrical and mechanical courses. During training, the participants were placed at Denver Technical College to complete at least N2 on their respective trades. Although it was planned that they will

complete their courses by September 2021, Covid-19 delays have meant that the duration was extended.

The participants are currently on-site for work experience on their respective trades and they are involved in works such as bricklaying, pipe trenching and laying, laying of new floor slabs and pillars, electrical ducting, and mechanical piping.

The 25 (of the 56) participants have been appointed to study the upholstery trade (wood making), which is informed by Key Result Area 5 in the NYS Business Plan 'expansion on to new arrears'. The Brits-based Upholstery to Furniture World training provider was contracted in March 2021 to conduct the upholstery training for the 25 participants.

The participants underwent theoretical and assimilation from April 2021 until September 2021. The participants have started with the site works in October 2021 and will be on site until April 2022. The exit workshop for these participants is planned for April 2022.

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EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME