



MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE, OFFICIATE THE NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE GRADUATION IN KHAYELITSHA, CAPE TOWN

Article By Lesego Moretlwe, picture by Lunga Mahlangu

The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Hon. Sihle Zikalala officiated and commended 108 EPWP participants who graduated under the umbrella of the National Youth Service as Carpenters and Community House Building trades within the Artisan Industry. Minister Zikalala awarded certificates of competence to the graduates during the ceremony which was held in Khayelitsha township in Cape Town.

As Minister Zikalala delivered a keynote address, he outlined the importance of the EPWP as a government poverty alleviation initiative as it provides training and work opportunities to the poor and unemployed South Africans. The Minister emphasised the significance of youth focused programmes such as the NYS in uplifting the socio-economic status of the individuals. He further indicated that the EPWP is contributing significantly towards service delivery, especially in the infrastructure.

“The NYS represents an initiative to engage the youth of our country in strengthening service delivery, promoting nation-building, fostering social cohesion and to assist the youth gain the necessary occupational skills in order to be able to access sustainable livelihoods opportunities” Minister Zikalala indicated.

Out of 108 graduates who were awarded certificates, 47 of them participated in the Community House Building through the Parliamentary Villages at Laboria, Acacia and Pelican Park. This Community House Building encompasses multiple technical skills in the field of construction.

The total budget allocation for this accredited skills programme was over R1.6 million. In addition to that, a total of 61 learners/graduates qualified in carpentry. The budget on

training was over R2 million, covering Life Skills, Medical Exam Tests, Trade Training, Transport, Stipend, PPE and working tools.

During the ceremony different Institutions such as Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, Independent Development Trust, Sisters in Construction etc. have pledged to offer employment to 56 NYS graduates. “We are also pleased that the EPWP has achieved absorption of some of the participants in permanent positions within Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) inclusive of other Private Public Partnerships” Minister concluded.

This NYS programme was implemented by the DPWI Cape Town Regional Office in partnership with TVET Colleges in the Western Cape, the Independent Development Trust (IDT) and the South African Police Services (SAPS).

Participant Testimony

One of the participants, Mr Aloy Loyiso expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to have participated in the EPWP and acquired training and skills in Carpentry under the NYS programme. Loyiso said previously his family used to hire people for fixing certain things in the house, now with the skills that he has acquired he does not have to spend his money on hiring a person for fixing of door latches and cupboards as he is able to do all that.

Loyiso said this training is a step closer for all the participants towards entering the workforce. “I think all of us (participants) should be more grateful because while on training we were paid a wage”, Loyiso concluded.

MINISTER ZIKALALA AND DEPUTY MINISTER SWARTS VISITED CHABALALA FARM AS PART OF THE SIYAHLOLA PROGRAMME

Article by Kgomotso Mathuloe, Picture by Lerato Mpiwa

As part of the Operation Siyahlola, Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Hon. Sihle Zikalala together with the Deputy Minister, Hon, Bernice Swarts visited the Chabalala Farm in Hazyview, Mpumalanga to monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of projects managed by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure as well as to accelerate service delivery.

The Chabalala farm is one of the projects implemented by the East High College Non- Profit Organisation (NPO) to alleviate poverty in the area. This NPO was contracted as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Non-State Sector Programme to alleviate poverty and create work opportunities for unemployed people in Mpumalanga.

This Farm was allocated 3 hectares of land by the traditional authority to farm cabbage, butternut and green beans. The

produce from the farm are sold to the big Supermarkets in Mpumalanga and Gauteng. The project created 100 work opportunities.

Addressing the Media during Operation Siyahlola visit, Minister Zikalala said that as part of the exit strategy, it is critical that Participants in this project are trained to farm and manage their businesses. Minister Zikalala encouraged the participants to start cooperatives so that they can implement similar projects.

This project visit is one of the build-up event leading to the celebration of 20 years of EPWP. Under the theme, EPWP Building Better Communities, the 20 years celebration will be held in Eastern Cape in March 2024.

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EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME