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Durban Regional Office Celebrates The EPWP Participants' Milestone Exiting The Programme Into Permanent Jobs

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The Durban Regional Office witnessed a happy ending for a total of 10 Expanded Public Works Programme participants when they were ushered into permanent employment in the Construction Industry. 'We are here to bear witness, celebrate and give thanks. We are witnesses to the good work that happened here, celebrate the achievement and thank all the stakeholders who were involved'. This message was echoed by the KwaZulu Natal EPWP Senior Manager, Mr Sduduzo Simelane when he outlined the purpose of the National Youth Service exit ceremony which took place on 05 August 2025 at Mahlungulu Community Hall, ward 10 in Manguzi.

These participants were placed and offered maintenance and repairs training at the Kosi Bay Port of Entry project. While in the project, the participants received both life skills and technical training. For life skills, the NYDA offered Mental Toughness training for five days covering life skills and job preparedness. The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) offered the Generate Your Business training. A training provider was appointed to render technical training in plumbing for three months which included classroom training, assessments, simulations and workplace exposure.

The EPWP initiated this project in April 2024 together with UMkhanyakude District Municipality, Umhlabuyalingana Local Municipality, nkosi Tembe, uMfolozi Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College Department of Employment and Labour (DOEL) as well as the local office of the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). This collaboration resulted in the recruitment of 10 young people to participate at Kosi Bay Port of Entry project.

As the training programme drew to a close at the end of July 2025, participants had achieved the following unit standards: *Monitor the Application of Safety Health and Environmental Protection Procedures; Install Maintain and Repair Sanitary-ware Appliances; Install Maintain and Test Hot Water Supply Systems; Install Maintain and Test Below Ground Drainage Systems; Install and Maintain Solar Water Heating Systems as well as Install Maintain and Test Cold Water Supply Systems.* In addition, participants received plumbing tool boxes which were handed out at the Exit Ceremony together with the certificates.

The appointed maintenance and repairs contractor at the Kosi Bay Point of Entry, Falcon, has offered participants employment contracts as an exit avenue.

Speaking on behalf of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, the Director for NYS at Head office Ms Lefentse Ratsela congratulated the participants and all stakeholders involved in the successful implementation and completion of the training programme. She urged the youth not to sell the tools handed at the ceremony but to utilise them to make a living by providing services required by community members and earn an income. She also challenged the Umhlabuyalingana Local Municipality to implement the Vuk'uphile programme to improve the CIDB grading of local contractors and thereby creating opportunities for these young people to compete with bigger businesses in the construction space.

