

EPWP BULLETIN

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PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE MINISTER DEAN MACPHERSON OUTLINES THE EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (EPWP) REFORM AGENDA

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The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Dean Macpherson has on, 05 June 2026 hosted a community engagement session at Buffalo Flats area in East London, Eastern Cape. This engagement session focussed on the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a service delivery initiative aimed at providing work opportunities and skills development interventions towards creating sustainable employment opportunities for the Programmes' participants.

In his keynote address, Minister Macpherson emphasised the EPWP reform agenda and its benefit for communities and individuals participating in the programme. He emphasised that the Listening Tours are not only about listening but it is also about finding solutions, hence the initiative of the newly launched EPWP Working on Infrastructure Programme which emanated from listening to the communities and finding solutions to challenges raised.

Through the nationwide listening tour, the Minister aims to hear directly from community members about their experiences with the Programme, address challenges and gather insights that will inform the Minister's vision for a re-imagined EPWP, focussed on long-term socio-economic empowerment within communities.

Furthermore, Minister Macpherson indicated that "We cannot exclude people from opportunities because of their age. While youth unemployment remains a priority, South Africans over the age of 40 also deserve access to opportunities created through programmes such as the EPWP," he said.

Community members shared their experiences of the programme and raised concerns relating to limited skills development initiatives, delayed stipend payments, shortages of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) lack of working tools, and inequitable access to opportunities. Participants also called for stronger collaboration between municipalities and Non-Profit Organisations to improve Programme delivery.

The Minister welcomed the feedback and noted that the insights gathered through the session would help shape a re-imagined EPWP that is more responsive to community needs. The engagement session was graced by the presence of senior officials from all spheres of government including Nkosi Nompumelelo Ndlazi from the Eastern Cape Provincial House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders, Chief Director: EPWP Infrastructure Sector Mr Ignatius Ariyo, Chief Director: EPWP Partnership Support Mr Musa Ntshani, Mr Lennox Mabaso, Chief Director: DPWI Communication, DPWI Eastern Cape Regional Manager Ms Nolzwi Hlengwa, and Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality Ward Councillor Ms Lucille Benfield.

The Councillor of Ward 46 Ms Lucille Benfiel and Inkosi Nompumelelo Ndlazi shared the same sentiments in expressing their gratitude about Minister Macpherson's initiative to visit the community and engage them on issues of service delivery, particularly on EPWP.

