EPWP BULLETIN

VOLUME 2. ISSUE 61. 23 OCTOBER 2026



MBHASHE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY'S EPWP PEACE OFFICERS PROJECT: A BEACON OF HOPE FOR YOUTH

Article and pictures by Masego Maselonyane



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Social Sector Peace Officers Project in Mbhashe Local Municipality is demonstrating how temporary work opportunities can become stepping stones towards sustainable employment, skills development and improved livelihoods for young people.

Initiated in 2024, the project aims to create temporary employment opportunities for local residents while equipping participants with practical workplace experience, relevant training and skills to improve their future employability. The initiative currently provides 16 work opportunities, with young people making up the majority of participants.
Beyond providing temporary income, the project has demonstrated encouraging employment outcomes. Approximately 12 former Peace Officers have exited the programme and secured full-time employment, with some employed as Traffic Officers and others as Security Guards. These achievements highlight the project's potential to bridge the gap between temporary work opportunities and longer-term employment.

Investing in Skills Development and Youth Empowerment Skills development is a key component of the Peace Officers Project. All newly appointed Peace Officers undergo an orientation programme lasting up to 10 days, equipping them with an understanding of their duties, responsibilities, expected standards of conduct and the operational environment in which they work.

Participants also receive training relevant to traffic management, public safety and the security sector. All Peace Officers participating in the project are firearm competent, providing them with an additional competency that may support employment opportunities in the broader security and law-enforcement environment. In a further investment in youth development, the municipality has identified opportunities for selected participants to obtain formal qualifications. Currently, four of the 16 Peace Officers have been sent to traffic college to undertake a one-year Traffic Diploma course.

The municipality covers their tuition fees, accommodation and meals, while they continue to receive their EPWP stipends for the duration of their studies. This approach enables participants to pursue further education while maintaining a source of income, reducing some of the financial barriers that may prevent young people from accessing formal qualifications.

Upon successful completion, the qualification could strengthen their prospects of securing employment in traffic management and related law-enforcement services. The Peace Officers play an important role in supporting municipal operations and promoting public safety within the community. Their duties include traffic control, assisting with the orderly movement of vehicles and pedestrians, enforcing municipal by-laws, participating in joint operations with other law-enforcement personnel, securing municipal buildings and property, and supporting broader public-safety activities when required.

Through these responsibilities, participants gain valuable practical experience while contributing to improved municipal service delivery, compliance with municipal by-laws and the safety of residents. The combination of workplace exposure, training and opportunities for further education positions the project as more than a temporary employment initiative. It provides participants with an opportunity to develop transferable skills and gain experience that may be valuable when pursuing employment beyond the programme.

From EPWP Participation to Sustainable Employment

One of the project's most encouraging achievements is the progression of former participants into full-time employment. Approximately 12 former Peace Officers have secured jobs, including positions as Traffic Officers and Security Guards.
These outcomes demonstrate the potential of targeted public employment initiatives to support young people in moving towards more sustainable livelihood opportunities. Although temporary employment does not automatically guar antee permanent work, the experience gained through the project, combined with skills development and formal training, can help participants improve their employment prospects.

The initiative also illustrates the importance of linking public employment programmes to recognised qualifications and potential career pathways. By investing in participants' development, Mbhashe Local Municipality is helping create opportunities that extend beyond the immediate benefits of an EPWP stipend.

Participant Success Story: Luzuko Ncoliwe

For Luzuko Ncoliwe, the Peace Officers Project has provided an opportunity to gain workplace experience, acquire new skills and pursue his educational ambitions.

Luzuko joined the programme in 2024 after learning about the advertised EPWP opportunities in a local newspaper. He submitted an application and was subsequently appointed as an EPWP Social Sector participant.
Since joining the project, he has benefited from several training and development opportunities. In 2025, he received crowd-control training, followed by Peace Officer orientation training in 2026. He has also received competency training in security and firearm handling.

Beyond the experience and training he has gained, Luzuko is using his EPWP stipend to contribute towards the cost of furthering his education. He is currently studying towards a Higher Certificate in Law, with the aim of building a future in a field related to law, security or law enforcement.
Luzuko expressed his excitement at being given the opportunity to participate in the EPWP. He highlighted the value of the experience and training he has received, noting that the stipend is helping him finance his studies.
His journey demonstrates how temporary employment can provide more than immediate financial support. For young people pursuing further education, an income from the programme can help meet educational costs, while practical workplace experience can contribute to personal growth and professional development.