

Expanded Public Works Programme

vuk'uphile

creating opportunities



public works

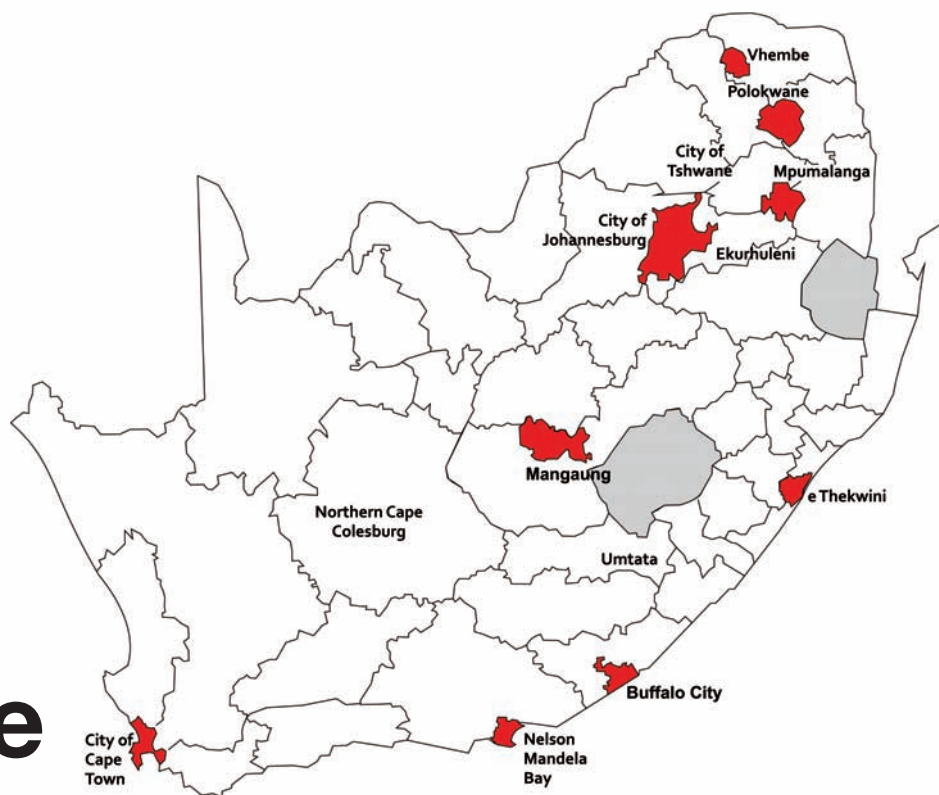
Department:
Public Works
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	2
• Purpose and Objectives	2
Testimonies by Vuk'Uphile beneficiaries per province	
• Gauteng	3
• North West	4
• Mpumalanga	5
• Limpopo	6
• Western Cape	7
• Eastern Cape	8
• Free State	9
• Kwazulu Natal	10
• Northern Cape	11
Abbreviations & Acronyms	11



- Sewers reticulation, i.e. excavations < 1.5m
- Water reticulation, i.e. excavations < 1.5m
- Electrical Lines, laying of cables & excavations
- Haul of material,

EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (Vuk'uphile- creating opportunities)

At the core of fighting poverty, inequality and unemployment lies Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) which is a flagship programme of the Department of Public Works. EPWP is government's key programme, aimed at emancipating the previously disadvantaged people through skills development and creation of work opportunities, while alleviating poverty and unemployment.

The EPWP was launched in April 2004 to promote economic growth and create sustainable development. The immediate goal of the EPWP Phase I was to help alleviate unemployment by creating at least 1 million work opportunities. Since its inception the focus and emphasis of the programme was on having at least 40% of its beneficiaries as women, 30% youth and 2% being people with disabilities.

Between 2009 and 2014, the EPWP had envisaged to create 4.5 million work opportunities, and thus ensuring that unemployed youth, women as well as persons with disabilities are at the forefront of the programme.

Among the skills and empowerment projects across South Africa, the Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme was introduced as an emerging contractor development programme that would see contractors using labour intensive methods of construction to implement government infrastructure projects such as:

- Low Volume Roads & Sidewalks, Traffic Volume < 500vpd
- Stormwater drains, i.e. excavations < 1.5m

Vuk'uphile- Creating opportunities

The National Department of Public Works (NDPW) initiated an Emerging Contractor Development Programme, called Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme. Vuk'uphile has been developed to build the capacity amongst emerging contractors to execute the increasing amount of labour-intensive work that is part of the EPWP. Learner contractors in the programme will also receive all the training required as part of the EPWP guidelines so that when they exit the programme they are fully qualified to bid and execute labour intensive projects. The Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme is intended to develop emerging contractors into skilled contractors able to execute labour-intensive projects. The emphasis of the programme is to develop administrative, technical, contractual, managerial and entrepreneurial skills of the learners.

Objectives and Outcomes of Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme

The Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme is intended to develop emerging contractors into fully fledged contractors to be able to execute labour-intensive projects. The emphasis of the programme is to develop administrative, technical, contractual, managerial and entrepreneurial skills of the learners.

TESTIMONIALS BY VUK'UPHILE BENEFICIARIES

GAUTENG

Tebogo Mafodi, owner of Mafodi Trading and Construction company based in Benoni, Ekurhuleni is one example of how EPWP Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme is adhering to its mandate by training and assisting young individuals, people with disabilities and emerging contractors with the necessary skills to be able to play a major role within the construction industry.



Since June 2012, the city of Ekurhuleni has created through, Ekurhuleni's second phase of Vuk'uphile, 3,874 work opportunities in quarter 1 and 2 of the 2012/2013 financial year and these opportunities were created through 20 Vuk'uphile contractors. These figures are set to increase significantly as we approach the end of the financial year. This is evidence of the results the learnership is yielding. As a businessman who always looks into the horizon, EPWP was a blessing in disguise for Tebogo, it came exactly at the time he needed it most. Although it was somewhat coincidental to learn about it at the Business Week event in Ekurhuleni where he was invited to deliver a speech on a technology they themselves have developed in the construction business.

After a bad business partnership venture that nearly left him in financial ruins, Tebogo Mafodi was inspired by one success story narrated by one Modise Motshwane. Motshwane was one of the previous beneficiaries on Ekurhuleni's Vuk'uphile Phase I, as a result, Mafodi became more interested on the programme

and waited for months for the advertisement to run on newspapers for the next intake of learners. Just when his patience was running thin, in the midst of giving up somebody told him that the advertisement was placed in the Sowetan newspaper, applied and was informed that he is also successful.

"To be practically honest the programme came at the right time for me after my failed business partnership which was not financially viable", said Mafodi

"I did a Construction Management course with one of the learning institutions but it did not offer in-depth knowledge of what actually happens in a construction site. My business administrative skills and financial skills are up to standard now, thanks to the Expanded Public Works Programme," Mafodi continued.

In conclusion Mafodi said *"The programme has taught me how to manage my resources, market my business, how to create a good environment for my employees and how to conduct my business within the construction industry. My company has also created 5 (five) permanent work opportunities and 10 (ten) casual work opportunities for the locals."*

Since its inception, the EPWP Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme has created more than 55,000 of work opportunities for individuals and business entities interested in the construction industry. As a national government initiative, the EPWP requires all state organs, provincial governments and municipalities to undertake, provide and or create jobs and to give training in order to alleviate poverty.

One of the beneficiaries of the programme is **Nelson Tinyiko Sithole** from Atteridgeville who owns Rolo Building Construction CC in South Africa's economic hub of the Gauteng province. After reading about the EPWP in a publication and going through the selection process for participation, he jumped onto the bandwagon and joined in 2005.



Life was tough for Sithole before joining the EPWP, his approach in terms of contracts and the way he used to do things was different. Since joining the programme his construction work took shape and standards of work also improved.

"After joining the programme I started to see the results of Vuk'uphile because firstly I did not have the necessary managerial skills to manage my business independently, secondly I did not have the right approaches like managing my team, finances and supervising my employees. Now I know how to do all of those and I am independent. I was below what we call a normal CIDB grade 1 and my work was below standard," Sithole stated.

In conclusion Sithole said: *"I have also learnt how to comply with labour laws, adhere to safety issues and registering of employees on the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF). My business is on grade 6 of the programme, and has accumulated half a million worth of assets after the completion of the programme."*



NORTH WEST

Below are the success stories of the contractors/learners who participated in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Vuk'uphile Project in the North-West province.

As the EPWP Vuk'uphile project's aspiration of ensuring that at least a bulk of its beneficiaries is women, a brightest star in the EPWP galaxy emerged. She used to keep the wolf from the door by running a catering business, her name is **Matlhodi Modiselle**. Matlhodi hails from Mothotlung near Brits in the Madibeng Municipality in North West province. She joined the EPWP from a catering background and she currently owns Omphi Construction.



The Programme changed her life completely since she comes from a different (hospitality) industry. *"I have learnt about theory, I know more about how to manage my business, how to save, how to deal with workers and how to communicate with people,"* said Matlhodi.

She further went on to learn about pricing and costing as well as running the project. Her eagerness and strong will to succeed has gained her the knowledge to fill in tender documents and market her business which are key aspects to every business. She has the courage, patience and determination of someone who is in pursuit of excellence. *"I have better understanding of how to market, even though you can market but if you are not successful you are not successful it's a win or lose, and then I know that every time I must read the newspapers to look for a tender and if it suits my CIDB and I go for it and I submit my tender documents. But in most cases we are so many but the chosen few get lucky,"* said Ms Modiselle.

Since joining the cutting edge of construction industry, she had been awarded with two tender projects, one for R800 000 and the other one for R200 000 and that afforded her the opportunity to prove her prowess in the industry. She hit the ground running from the business of fork & knife, spices and pots right into the thick of construction and made a profit of +-R200 000 from the projects. To top it all she completed the project within a shorter period of two months than the set three months duration of the project.

Ms Modiselle who is also a mother of three, attributes her administrative intelligence to the EPWP mentorship, a component of the Learnership Programme that is fundamental to the success of the Programme they received as learners. She concedes that as learners they did not have the technical know-how in terms of financial management, but the mentor shed light into key aspects of business and as a result her company managed to make such incredible profit of +-R200 000

from the project after paying all the logistical requirements as well as employees. She emphasised by highlighting that her mentor's role came in very handy not only for her but for the entire business to use money and time wisely and sparingly.

In her case, partnership amongst fellow learners yielded positive results, and this came by sharing ideas in terms of planning, organizing and implementation of what was learnt during the programme. They paved the R200 million road together by sharing portions of it and she was the first to complete the project with 15 labourers, 12 of those being unskilled.

Since exiting the Vuk'uphile EPWP Learnership Programme in 2010/2011, Ms Modiselle has worked with South African State Security Agency (SASSA) and applied the maintenance and plumbing skills she learnt at the training. The two contracts/projects rewarded her around the tune of R100 000 and moreover she still has a sound relationship with Constitutional Hill. She continues to market her business, but mostly at government's briefing sessions.

In terms of life improvement although tentatively, Ms Modiselle said Vuk'uphile learnership Programme drastically changed her life since she was clueless on the field of construction and after joining Vuk'uphile she had also managed to buy herself a car. She lamented the fact that her major challenges were tendering without any successes, however she is soldiering on as a true business woman.

She encouraged aspirant people sitting at home and interested in joining the EPWP Vuk'uphile to grab the opportunity with two hands.

Johanna Mmashikoane Matlou who owns Lekwakwe Construction & Projects is another beneficiary of the Vuk'uphile Programme. Ms Matlou who is also from North-West province and a former South African Post Office worker started with the Expanded Public Works Programme in 2006 and her first project was in 2008. She learnt about the EPWP on the newspaper and also gained more information on the programme through word of mouth from the local Councillor. Since then she never looked back but cast her eyes in the horizon by enrolling in the Expanded Public Works Programme Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme.



She has since learnt various aspects of construction and related areas within the Programme, amongst other, she now knows building and construction, carpentry, paving, profiling, gabion and water reticulation. *"I was excited because it was something new to me, and all those things I can now do them from the top of my head, I can do them without any assistance from the mentor or supervisor,"* said Ms Matlou.

The Vuk'uphile learnership programme trained her on how to manage staff, books, check stock and run the entire business without any hassles. She has employed about ten employees in her business but due to recession the number was trimmed to four. In 2010, Johanna was awarded a R450 000 tender to renovate a school in Lebotloane village in the North-West province. Although the project was not part of EPWP, she applied all the skills and techniques she learnt from the Programme. She also erected a palisade fencing around the Langeberg Cemetery and extended the offices and built ablution blocks and storage at the cemetery.

Through her training she encountered that various problems emanated from dealing with consultants but she managed to rise up above her obstacles. She also got an opportunity to do paving in Jericho, which was an assignment that earned her a One General Building (1 GB) CEPE3 grading in 2011.

Despite all the challenges in the construction industry she still has a positive attitude, the Vuk'uphile project has taught her not only to eat fish but how to catch it through the experience and the grading she acquired. She is now well versed in administrative, technical, contractual, managerial and entrepreneurial skills. *"The experience and grading were the best; if it was not for that I would not have CEPE3 grading. Otherwise everything went smooth for me,"* said Johanna Matlou.

The Langeberg Cemetery Project



MPUMALANGA

Johanna Mawela, a beneficiary from Bronkhorspruit in Mpumalanga joined the EPWP in November 2004 and completed the programme in 2006. She left her teaching profession to try her hand in the corporate world which was not so welcoming to her. She later decided to enter the construction industry after a short stint in the corporate world, where she hit the ground running by building RDP houses.



She saw the advert on the Sunday publication and applied as they say the rest is history. Ms Mawela said she has learnt a lot particularly in terms of interpretation of designs of the construction as well as using all the instruments used in the sector:

The training she received benefited her business a lot in a sense that her grading improved tremendously where she finds herself on Grade 5CE, PE and 5 GB CE. *"To date I am at Grade 5CE, PE and 5 GB PE, because of the exposure gained from the Vuk'uphile Programme,"* said Ms Mawela.

She attributes the seamless transition from being a learner to being in the open market to her mentors who were very good and dedicated in class and on site. *"Fortunately we had very good mentors then, our mentors were very good in class and on site and they taught us a lot of things relating to construction that one wouldn't have coped alone in a very new industry. ...we had very good mentorship,"* highlighted Johanna.

Although she considers herself successful she indicated that there were still loopholes in her company, in that she is still doing marketing, administration and other company related logistics on her own, however she only calls more personnel when there is a project. As part of additional skills, she also acquired a skill in Technical Drawing.

She said with confidence that her life has changed a great deal since she joined Vuk'uphile programme, she went on to say that she is financially independent thanks to the programme. Her secret to sustaining her company was doing marketing and tendering on her own. *"I became more responsible than before because I was on my own, I do read newspapers, I go for tendering, submit and fortunately I do get some projects and complete all my work in time,"* said Ms Mawela.

In conclusion, she said that Vuk'uphile lives to the true meaning of its name of uplifting people and developing their lives.

Vuk'uphile went on to touch base with one of its beneficiaries by the name of **Steven Mahlangu** from KwaMhlanga also in Mpumalanga province who owns Mahlangust Construction. Mr Mahlangu, like many others saw the Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme on the newspaper which he started in 2004. Before joining the EPWP, he was already in the construction business and had a sub-contract in the local town that he was busy with.



Although he had a construction background, Steven learnt many things he did not know from Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). He acquired a grade 3 CEPE and in itself contributed more into his business.

Steven reckons the training in administration, business, managerial and technical skills he received has improved and helped him tremendously. *"It improved a lot, for example, we did not know about sureties, insurance, compensation fund and a lot more,"* said Mahlangu. When asked about additional skills, Mahlangu said that he was clueless and knew nothing about water reticulation when he joined EPWP, but now it is one of the skills he acquired and applies in his business.



"My life changed because now I have Grade 5 in CEPE, and now I can compete with other big companies that have experience in this industry," said Mahlangu. His grades improved from 3 CEPE to 5 CEPE since he joined EPWP. As the head of the family, the expertise from Vuk'uphile has helped him to take care of his family's upkeep.



LIMPOPO

Daniel Tshivhula of Tshidambo Trading Enterprises from Nzhelele in Limpopo, who joined the Expanded Public Works Programme on 22 May 2006 having heard of the programme through his Nephew who read about it in a well-known newspaper and informed him about the programme had this to say;



"Before joining the EPWP life was very tough, because I was unemployed and relied on odd jobs for a living. I applied for the programme and was one of the 300 selected. We went through all the proper channels for selection in the programme and was trained at Giyani Training Centre until 2007," said Tshivhula.

Tshivhula further stated that; *"There at Giyani as contractors we were taught how to run a business efficiently, from construction management, administrative side to the implementation of theoretical and practical training on site."*

"The Vuk'uphile programme has changed my life and has given me financial stability because I have since built my family a house," concluded Tshivhula.

Rachel Ncube a learner contractor who hails from Polokwane also in Limpopo owns Alizane Civil and Building Construction joined the learnership programme in 2006 after reading about it in the local newspaper:



"Life was tough before joining the programme and getting employment in the construction industry was tough due to my company's lack of grades' alignment with the Construction Industry Development



Board (CIDB). The training was a good experience because we learned hands-on, about road construction and business management," said Ncube.

"Under the guidance of mentors it became much easier, they helped us a lot because we did not have experience and skills to manage projects and my business as well as administrative proficiency such as registration of employees on the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), Value Added Tax (VAT) compliance and payroll administration," continued Ncube.

In conclusion Ncube said "My company's CIDB has increased to 4 CEPE after joining the programme, and my family life has also improved for the better."



WESTERN CAPE

Pat Guenantin from Bellville in the Western Cape joined the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a learner in 2005 and she owns a Guenantin Construction CC. Before joining the programme, Pat was unemployed and struggling after being retrenched for two years. She was doing networking in an effort to support her husband's failing business venture. After doing background work for her husband she decided to look for something concrete since she needed to take care of her schooling children.



She saw the advertisement on the newspaper and she was almost shut outside because she saw the advert towards the closing date but, she fortunately made the cut and was selected amongst thousands. Pat was one of the first group of ten that was selected in the Western Cape and she was the only woman among nine men. "Out of thousands I then was notified that I had made it...unbelievably so".

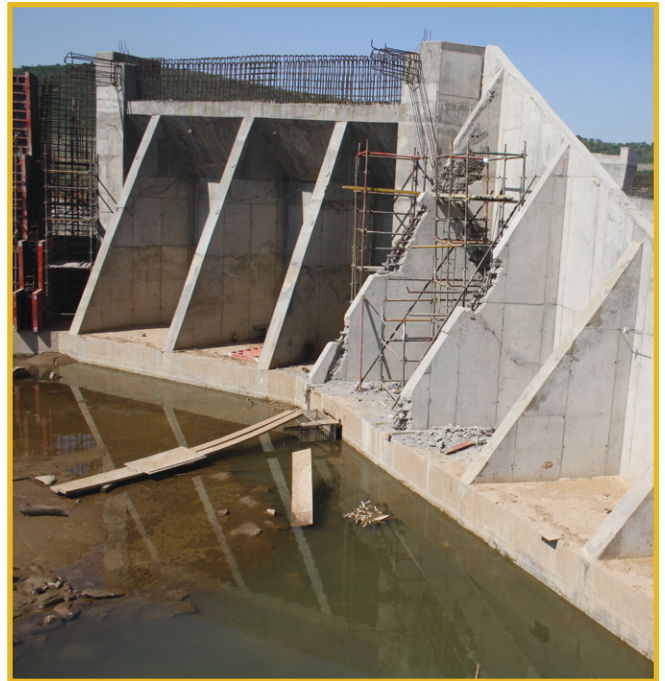
For Pat everything was virtually new to her, because she never ran a business in her life although she assisted her husband.

She maintained that the trainers and mentors were marvellous and gave her enough insight and support to stand on her two feet. "The training changed my whole life," she also added that she has learnt a lot and made a lot of changes in her business and she can now assist others in their businesses.

So far Pat belongs to various associations in line with her construction business. She is currently a member of Cape Chamber of Commerce among others. She

has established a good clientele in construction and businesses on the side. She went through a dry spell after the completion of her learnership, her 4 CIDB was then downgraded to 3 CIDB due to inactivity, but she managed to sustain the 3 CIDB grading.

The programme improved her personal life dramatically enabling her to enrol her children to better schools, extend her house as well as sending her children to their favourite Sport overseas without any funding from anyone. "It changed our lifestyle I must say," She employs people from areas that she does her work in but also has six permanent staff on her payroll. She is very grateful to the department and the opportunity she was offered to change her lifestyle.



EASTERN CAPE

Ayanda Gili from the Eastern Cape owns Skhonza Construction and she joined the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in May 2006 after seeing the advertisement on the daily newspaper. She never looked back as life was tough and she managed to grab the opportunity with two hands. The initial stages of the programme were not easy, but with the help of the department and mentors they dusted the problems off and continued with the journey.



The training she received uplifted not only her grading's but the entire company. *"I am sitting on 3 CEPE grade and I would like to think that it is due to the EPWP's input because in it I have learnt many ways of moving up and uplifting my company, hence I am still in business,"* she remarked.

She has learnt to do things professionally and now she is well versed in terms of running the company professionally unlike previously where she was fiddling with everything. *"Right now I know I have to be up to date in mostly everything. I have to use professional bookkeeping rather than try to fiddle things myself, initially I did not know that, all I knew was that I am making my money and I have to use it as I see fit but now I know differently,"* stated Ayanda.

The support of mentors came in very handy and helped her to unearth the self-confidence within her. Although it wasn't easy-going, it gave her the guts to go and look for projects in terms of marketing, and she is very thankful for that. She created eight permanent jobs and 32 casuals were employed as result of the training she received.

Ayanda studied Business Management at school but it does not come anywhere near the practical skills she acquired from the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). *"They have taught me management, even though I have done Business Management at school that was just theory, now I know how to do the practical side of things and how to be a good manager. Because you can't be a manager, and every day you bring somebody new but through their skills I am proud to say I am still working with the employees I started with in 2006,"* she said.



Ever since she started the programme her life has changed for the better *"Today I am independent I don't rely on anybody for survival, I can go and buy my own things rather than go and beg from somebody else, the Programme gave me that independence to be financially independent in every level."*

Ayanda is one person who goes after what she wants, she considers herself as a fighter and has a never-give-up attitude. She sustains her company in the open market through hard work and perseverance. She is one person who doesn't rely solely on municipalities but tenders where she sees opportunities. Through her own marketing she has landed two contracts with two big companies.

She is currently busy on two projects; the walkway (curbing and priming) from Green River to Tsitsikama, the N2 road upgrading and also doing electricity ducting for 2 kilometers' in Port Elizabeth.

She is one person who does not shy away from asking questions and that has helped her to prosper in her business. She says she may be up and coming but prides herself with quality and she knows whoever comes after will never find anything to cry about.

Fezeka Mnyute lives in the Eastern Cape province and owns Fello Construction Developers CC. Fezeka, like many others, saw the EPWP advertisement on the newspaper and she applied. She has had an interesting and inspiring experience during her training.



She attributes her good planning and financial management and generally managing the projects to the training she received from EPWP Vuk'uphile. She also said the transition from being a learner to an independent business woman was never easy but the skills she acquired from mentors have kept her afloat in the business. *"I have benefitted really, because previously I wasn't focussing much on those things like financials, budgeting and others, but now I know how to budget. I have to do the financials like cash flows and financial plans,"* said Fezeka.

Her life has changed tremendously both financially and business-wise. *"I would say I have become more wiser financially and generally, I have become more enlightened with things and the economy and the things that are happening around the world,"* highlighted Ms Mnyute.

Her sharpest spear in marketing her company is a word of mouth and browsing through the internet. She is on 4CE as per industry grading. She is currently busy with sanitation (VIP toilets) project in the Amathole District Municipality. Ms Mnyute employs three staff members on a permanent basis and casuals ranging from 25 to 50 employees depending on the size of the project. Her success is also reflected in her children since one of them is enrolled at a tertiary institution thanks to EPWP Vuk'uphile Learnership.

Another beneficiary of the EPWP Vuk'uphile learnership, **Mongezi Dzina** started the programme in 2005. He is the Managing Director of Dzina Construction, after seeing the advertisement on the newspaper Dzina gave up a chalk and duster career as a teacher, he applied and got successful.



He said the learnership was very informative, interesting, constructive and very helpful. He joined the learnership without any experience but gained a lot of experience and his gradings leap-frogged from grade one to grade five.

He confidently said that the training benefitted his business a lot, *"It benefitted me a lot from the management side of the business, from dealing with suppliers, South African Revenue Services (SARS) and others."*

The transition according to him was very difficult and full of surprises and challenges, but the support from mentors, the department and municipality was overwhelming and through endurance they managed to go beyond all their obstacles. He beats his chest when asked about his improvement after joining EPWP Learnership. *"I have improved a lot because almost I am by myself now, I am on my own, I deal with the banks on my own, I deal with banks and South African Revenue Services (SARS) on my own, basically I am on my own because even tendering I do it on my own, I am independent now...fully independent but basically it's through EPWP because before, I knew nothing about these aspects and now I can safely say I am independent"* said Mr Dzina.

He went on to say that he can do cash flows, manage the site, legal requirements such as workman compensations, Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), and Value Added Taxes (VAT) as well as applying for his financing in the bank without any assistance.

Mongezi's life has changed for the better since he joined the EPWP Vuk'uphile Learnership *"My life has changed a lot...financially, skills-wise, I am better off skilled now, I have better knowledge of understanding things than before, and basically I am independent even at home, I have achieved a lot in fact even for personal gains I have moved almost five steps ahead from where I was when I joined the programme,"* he said.

He is currently working on the ten months project with Amathole sanitation project in Centane in Mthata and he is doing 1800 units. He has got eight permanently employed staff on his payroll, and a fluctuating number which ranges between 50 to 66 casuals.

He solely depends on tenders for marketing purposes, however, he is in a process of developing a website with the help of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in order to expand his marketing strategy. His two children have enrolled at tertiary institutions from the proceeds he makes from his projects.



Free State

Motlatsi Foko, from Bloemfontein in Free State Province started the programme in 2005. He is the Managing Director of FMP Contractors CC, after seeing the advertisement on the local newspaper, Motlatsi applied and was informed that he was also successful.



"Honestly the learnership programme was very informative, interesting, constructive and very helpful". I joined the learnership without any experience but gained a lot of experience on the training.

Motlatsi's life has changed for the better since he joined the Expanded Public Works Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme *"I am better off skilled now, I have better knowledge of understanding things than before, and basically I am independent even at home, I have achieved a lot in fact even for personal gains I have moved almost five steps ahead from where I was when I joined the programme,"* he said.

He is currently working on a one year road construction contract with Mangaung municipality and he is also doing road maintenance in the Bloemfontein area. He has got 15 permanently employed staff on his payroll and approximately 35 to 40 casuals.

Koleka Jonas joined the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a learner in 2004 and she owns Umvezi Construction CC. Before joining the programme, Koleka was doing a final year Civil Engineering student at the University of Free State.



She also saw the advertisement on the local newspaper and all the final year students were fortunate as the Vuk'uphile Learnership was also introduced to them by their lecturer. She fortunately made the cut and was selected amongst thousands. Koleka was also one of the first learner selected in the Free State. *"Out of close to five hundred learners to be selected on this programme it was exciting".*

She had a great experience during the course of her programme, *"Just imagine coming fresh from school without any experience, I had to make sure that I ask questions where I don't understand, but I must tell you this day what a wonderful experience and I have enjoyed so much,"* said Koleka.

Everything was new to her, because she never ran a business in her life. She maintained that the trainers and mentors were marvellous and gave them enough insight and support to stand on her own. *"The training changed my whole life,"* she also added that she has learnt a lot and made a lot of changes in her business and she can now assist others in their businesses.

Koleka is currently a member of South African Women in Construction (SAWIC). She has established a good clientele in construction and businesses. Koleka now holds 6 CIDB grading as she has completed construction work in the Free State.

Koleka mostly employs people from areas that she does her work in but also has ten permanent staff on her payroll. She is very grateful to the department and the opportunity she was offered to change her lifestyle.



KwaZulu-Natal

Another Vuk'uphile learner, **Bonga Sibiya** comes from Pietermaritzburg in the KwaZulu-Natal province and started the programme in 2005. He is the Managing Director of Imvusa Trading 595CC, after seeing the advert on the newspaper Mr Sibiya applied and got successful.



He said the learnership was very informative, interesting and very helpful. He joined the learnership without any exposure but gained a lot of experience and his gradings improved from grade one to 7 CEPE.

He said that the training benefitted his business a lot, *"It benefitted me a lot from the management side of the business from dealing with suppliers"*.

The transition according to him was very difficult and full of surprises and challenges, but the support from mentors, the department and municipality was overwhelming and through endurance they managed to go beyond all their



obstacles. He boasts when asked about his improvement after joining Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

Bonga's life is no longer the same since he joined the EPWP Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme *"My life has changed financially and I have better knowledge of understanding things than before,"* said Bonga.

He is currently working on the six (6) months road-sealing project with eThekweni Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal province. He has got 3 skilled workers as permanently employed staff on his payroll, and casual workers ranges between 20 to 30 employees.

He depends on tenders and quotations from different government departments in the KwaZulu-Natal province.

Zenzele Thabethe lives in Pinetown, KwaZulu-Natal and joined the Expanded Public Works Programme as a learner in 2005 and he owns Inyameko Trading 148CC. Before joining the programme, Zenzele was struggling to find employment. He saw the advert on the local newspaper and applied to the Department of Public Works. Fortunately he was selected amongst thousands of other applicants. Mr Thabethe was one of the first group that was selected in the first pilot in the KwaZulu-Natal area. *"Out of thousands I then was notified that I am successful...it was unbelievable and I feel honoured to say that I am now standing on Grade 6 CEPE"*



Zenzele had an excellent experience during the course. *"But I must tell you today that it was wonderful experience to do the course and I have enjoyed so much,"* said Zenzele.

Everything was new to Zenzele, because he never ran a business in his entire life. But he kept on saying that the trainers and mentors were good and gave them enough support. *"Allow me to say that the training changed my whole life,"* He also

added that he has learnt a lot and made a lot of changes in his business and he can now assist others in their businesses.

Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme also helps Zenzele in terms of administration and as well as managing his company. He is proud to say that he can do tendering and preparation of quotations on his own.

So far Zenzele has established a good clientele in construction and businesses on the side.

The programme improved his personal life enabling her to create job opportunities from areas that he does his work. He has five permanent staff on his payroll.

intensive infrastructure work spawned by the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

After dropping out of university for personal reasons, Timothy was not sure of his life path but was determined to give something else a go. "I did some research and found out about this programme," he says.

They have gained the technical know-how and the dynamics of the construction business in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Vuk'uphile learnership. They benefitted a lot from the programme because they understand the dynamics involved in doing all the work from the start of a construction project to completion. Thuleka and Timothy have learned to use the correct material as prescribed in the industry with regard to technical skills. The pair has further learnt to do administration in terms of proper planning as well as knowing how to manage construction, cost, time and the site establishment in general.

So far we have completed a bulk water supply project, which was to construct a 450m out 4.5km bulk water supply line with Umsombovu Local Municipality in Colesberg. "It was a wonderful experience to be part of the project and we have enjoyed so much" said Thuleka.

Northern Cape

With the age gap of more than 5 years between them **Thuleka Gonanda** and **Timothy Mabandla** should have little in common. But the generation and gender differences don't mean much to the two in their pursuit of a common goal.



Thuleka Gonanda and Timothy Mabandla are both learner contractors from Yirha Construction at Colesberg in the Northern Cape Province. They joined the Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme in June 2011, although the pair were already in the construction industry when they saw the advertisement in the media. They felt that they needed some formal training to improve their construction skills and know-how.



Thuleka had been unemployed for seven years before joining the Vuk'uphile programme, which aims to build capacity among emerging construction contractors so they can access the increasing volume of labour



ACRONYMS

DPW	Department of Public Works
CIDB	Construction Industry Development Board
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
VAT	Value-Added Tax
SAPO	South African Post Office
SAWIC	South African Women in Construction
SARS	South African Revenue Services
SMME	Small Medium and Micro Enterprises
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
CC	Close Corporation
CEPE	Civil Engineering Potential Emerging
GB	General Building



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