

Second chance at life

When 37-year-old Thami Dlamini got a job in the South African National Defence Force in 2005, he was over the moon. But then a car accident in 2007 changed his good fortune.

The accident cost him his job, and he has since lost the use of his left arm. He lost all belief and motivation. "It was very tough, especially at home. Unemployment is never good, especially if you're the man of the house, with children to support."

For two years, Dlamini roamed the streets of Mpumalanga, not knowing where his next meal would come from. The situation was becoming dire, but then he joined the project that saved him.

"I joined an Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) project that involved chicken processing, vegetable gardening and the maintenance of public buildings.

"I used the money I earned to buy food for my family, and saved a little for my child's future. I really hope we can get more projects, so that I can save more money towards my child's education."

As breadwinner of a family of six, Dlamini says he will forever be grateful to the EPWP project. The skills he has gained and the support from the community is comforting.

"The training that I received in chicken processing is helpful. The accident took away my arm, but no one can take the skills that I've gained from this project."