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Public Works  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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# **‘We are proud of work done by EPWP Working on Fire team’ Deputy Minister Cronin**

By Michael Mokoena



The Department of Public Works has commended its Expanded Public Works Programme's Working on Fire team that was part of the operation to extinguish fires that threatened to take lives and destroy properties and the environment in the Western Cape earlier in March 2015.

Public Works Deputy Minister Jeremy Cronin said on 08 March 2014 that the Working on Fire programme is one of the flagship programmes of the EPWP. Over 1 000 Working on Fire participants from various provinces joined the operation.

“We are proud of the work done by our EPWP participants in Cape Town. They have joined with various organisations and the people of Cape Town to extinguish the ongoing fires in the Southern Peninsula,” he said.

Deputy Director-General of the EPWP in the national Department of Public Works, Mr Stanley Henderson, said: “This is what we mean when we say that EPWP is a programme of the people of South Africa that response to all societal challenges”.

“We are truly proud of the work done by the DEA [Department of Environmental Affairs] in conserving our environment and saving the lives, properties and the environment that was at risk of being destroyed by these fires.”

The areas that were affected by the fires include Muizenberg, Bredasdorp, Tulbagh, Hermanus and parts of the Southern Cape.

The Working on Fire teams worked with other fire fighters from Volunteer Wild Fire Services, the Table Mountain National Park and local municipalities.

The Western Cape General Manager of Working on Fire, Mr Shane Christian,

said the fires could have had a devastating socio-economic impact had it not been for the involvement of EPWP Working on Fire teams.

“We must compliment the government for funding this programme. The government has used close to R4 million to fund this operation since Sunday 1 March 2015.

“Working on Fire costs alone are well over R600 000 over the last four days. The R4 million we are talking about includes aircraft costs and fire fighting. In this operation, we have used four helicopters to drop more than two million litres of water since this operation started,” he said.

Christian said that unfavourable weather conditions that had prevailed in the area had made their mission difficult.

“However working together with other fire-fighters, we managed to extinguish the fires,”

The EPWP fire fighters team leader, Bonga Bekwa, said: “We are proud of being part of the bold team of fire fighters who participated in the operation. The training, experience and support we received from the EPWP afforded us an opportunity to stop these fires.”

The community of Cape Town also hailed the EPWP's involvement in the operation. Lisa Clinton, a resident of Muizenberg, said: “It (was) inspiring to see these brave young people enduring the most difficult situations to fight for our community. We are proud of them and may government invest more resources in recruiting more youngsters into such social upliftment programmes.”

# Deputy Minister Jeremy Cronin pays tribute to Cape pilot

By Michael Mokoena



Public Works Deputy Minister Jeremy Cronin on 10 March 2015 joined South Africans in sending condolences to the family of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Working on Fire pilot Willem Hendrik “Bees” Marais, who died in a helicopter crash while dousing fires at Cape Point Nature Reserve.

The deceased was a freelance flyer for the EPWP Working on Fire, for over three years

Deputy Minister Cronin said: “Our hearts go out to the Marias family, friends and colleagues, who indeed lost their loved one. The tragedy of Marias’s death is a pain that is felt by all South Africans.”

“Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and colleagues at this time of hardship. We wish them strength, hope and courage in these difficult times.”

Marais was killed on 08 March 2015 when his helicopter crashed while he was assisting with efforts to contain the raging fire across the Cape

Peninsula. His chopper was reported to have crashed in mountainous terrain during a forced landing.

Investigators of the South African Civil Aviation Authority have investigated the events surrounding the aircraft crash.

The pilot was one of thousands of EPWP fire fighters who responded to a societal call to protect the lives and properties of communities that were at risk of being destroyed by the fires in March in the Western Cape.

The Deputy Director General (DDG) of EPWP in the national Department of Public Works, Stanley Henderson, also paid tribute to Marias.

He said Marais’s hard work and commitment to the improvement of the lives of the people of Cape Town would be remembered forever, and that he died as a hero.



# Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) resolve to accelerate social services delivery

By: Kgomotso Mathuloe and Lesego Moretlwe



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Social sector resolved to accelerate the delivery of community development and social protection services which serve as a safety net to millions of the poor and unemployed South Africans.

This commitment was undertaken during a three day Social Sector conference hosted by Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini in Worcester, Western Cape on 24- 26 February 2015. The conference was held under the theme, “EPWP Social Sector: Advancing Socio-Economic Development”

The conference was also held in partnership with the Departments of Public Works, Basic Education, Health and the Independent Development Trust (IDT) as well as other relevant partners in the social sector.

During her key note address, minister Bathabile Dlamini has urged that Phase 3 of the EPWP Social Sector must aim high and work more harder towards increasing current work opportunities set targets.

Minister Dlamini said that in addition to more than four million work opportunities created during EPWP Phase 2, the emphasis should be more on the impact of the EPWP within the communities where these projects are being implemented.

Among other issues discussed during the conference were mainstreaming disability in EPWP Phase 3, Career-pathing, compliance with Ministerial Determination on EPWP and enhancing the role of sector programmes. The Social Sector is expected to create over 1 million Million work opportunities to the overall target of 6 million work opportunities during the implementation of the EPWP Phase 3 (2014/15-2018/19)

The following are some of the resolutions adopted to be implemented by all EPWP Social sector partners within the next financial year (2015/16)

- Review existing implementation instruments and thus mainstreaming provision for (2%) disability to ensure targeted funding during planning stage
- Facilitate adherence to EPWP principles and standards among funded organisations
- Strengthen provision of technical support to ensure EPWP compliance
- Strengthen linkages/partnerships with relevant institutions and entities

This Sector create work opportunities such as Early Childhood Development (ECD), Home and Community Based Care (HCBC), National School Nutrition Programme, Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Programme, Mass Sports Participation and Community Safety programmes.

Minister Dlamini told conference delegates that despite challenges of the EPWP Social Sector, it is imperative to note that the sector has in the past received positive testimonies from EPWP volunteers who were very satisfied with the level of training and work experience they gained through EPWP.

“Such stories must not be seen as isolated cases but must be seen to be the dominant stories of the Sector. Initiatives such as those in North West where a big number of volunteers were trained to become auxiliary social workers must be replicated throughout the country and showcased as success stories. We must identify similar initiatives in other programmes and this can be achieved through alignment with relevant partners such as professional bodies, training institutions and relevant departments such as the Department of Higher Education and Training and other training institutions,” said Minister Dlamini.

“The decision of continuing training in the social sector remains a very correct one. It is through accredited training that we are able to achieve such goals as career-pathing and the mainstreaming of disability in some instances. We therefore need to continue to engage training providers and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to assist in this regard. The gradual increase on the participation and reporting of municipalities is a positive move which needs a rapid scale up,”added Minister Dlamini.

for provision of accredited training/professionalisation interventions in line with occupations to achieve self employment and employability (DHET, FETs, SETAs, SOE's)

- Facilitate adherence to EPWP principles and standards among funded organisations

In his closing remarks the Deputy Director General for the People with Disabilities in Social Development, Mr Mxolisi Tony emphasised that all the implementing bodies of the EPWP Social Sector must ensure that they efficiently implement the resolutions adopted during the conference.

# EPWP staff vital in moving the programme forward to the 6 million work opportunity target: DDG Henderson

By Michael Mokoena



"You (EPWP staff members) are very important in the Government's task of improving the lives of our people through the work that you do in EPWP. When the State President, honourable Jacob Zuma delivered his 2015 State of the Nation Address (SONA) in Parliament on 12 February he spoke about your work. You must be proud of yourselves for doing so well!"

The above statement was made by the Deputy Director General (DDG) of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the national Department of Public Works, Mr Stanley Henderson, on 20 February 2015 when he addressed the 2015/16 EPWP Business Planning Session at the Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg, Gauteng.

He said that staff members had to take pride in being ambassadors of EPWP.

"Let's all espouse the leadership and management skills required to move this programme forward," he added.

Mr Henderson urged the officials to take responsibility for their work and be accountable in executing their duties.

He added that he remained confident that each staff member would work harder to move the EPWP forward.

The meeting was a success as over a hundred EPWP staff members from the national, provincial and district offices attended.

It (meeting) was chaired by the Chief Director

of Operations Ms. Kelebogile Sethibelo. The staff members were also briefed in terms of the 2014/15 progress reports by the Chief Director of Infrastructure Mr. Ignatius Ariyo and as well as the Chief Director for Partnership Support – Ms. Carmen-Joy Abrahams.

In his presentation, Ariyo pointed out that the Government was set to achieve its target of creating over 1 million work opportunities by the end of this month (March 2015).

"By the end of the second quarter we had created more than 613 000 EPWP work opportunities. The variant is 106 000 work opportunities over the target. So we are slightly ahead of target," he said.

Ariyo pointed out that the Department fell slightly below its target in terms of the disbursement of the EPWP Incentive Grant for the 2014/15 financial year.

The target was to disburse 90 percent of the grant but by the end of December (2014) the Department had disbursed about 78 percent of the Incentive Grant.

"In terms of municipalities we have distributed 69 percent of the EPWP Integrated Grant by the end of December (2014). Our target was to disburse 70 percent of this grant," Ariyo said.

On training, Ariyo pointed out that the department had exceeded its Annual Performance Plan (APP) target of training over 800 EPWP participants

through the National Skills Fund – training a total of 2236 participants.

"Over 2040 participants have been trained on accredited programmes while 110 participants are on learnerships. In fact we have exceeded our target by 1836," he added.

Ariyo said that the EPWP's National Youth Service (NYS) programme was still faced with challenges as it was battling to meet its target of recruiting 3600 in this financial year.

"By the end of January (2015) we had only been able to attract close to a thousand young people to this programme. This is as a result of the delays in the implementation of projects at the district level. We would also need to assist districts to improve its work on this programme," he said.

Miss Abrahams' presentation was frank and offered remedial actions to concerns raised by the Auditor General (AG) on the verification of participants and project data.

She said that the AG's findings occurred as a result of a number of issues including internal control deficiencies.

Abrahams said that the Department's action plan indicated that the EPWP monitoring unit had to perform validity tests on the Intergrated Reporting System (IRS) system on a quarterly basis to ensure that the information on the system is valid and accurate.



She added that the Office of the AG has sampled projects from the Quarter 2 data of 2014/15 to visit.

“The AG will be visiting the projects to check a range of issues including the site attendance registers, payment registers, ID copies of participants as well as copies of contracts. Regional Officers (ROs) are required to ensure that all the required documents are at the sites in preparation for the audit,” she added.

She expressed confidence that the EPWP will be able to resolve all issues raised by the AG.

# EPWP is about the development of our nation: DDG Henderson

By Michael Mokoena

The objective of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Phase 3 is about providing work opportunities and income support to poor and unemployed people through the labour-intensive delivery of public and community assets, thereby contributing to development.

The Deputy Director General (DDG) of EPWP in the national Department of Public Works, Mr Stanley Henderson, on 20 February 2015 made it clear that “it is imperative to appreciate that the EPWP Phase 3 stands firmly within the ambit of development of our nation”.

“We are saying that EPWP Phase 3 is beyond achieving our target of creating more that 6 million EPWP work opportunities by 2019.”



“At the heart of EPWP is the development of our people through the assets and services that we are creating. We are looking at the key output at the end of each EPWP project– for instance it (the key output) could be the children in poor communities who are benefiting from our Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres or even the community that is benefiting from our home community based care services,” Henderson said.

Henderson was addressing the 2015/16 EPWP Business Planning Session at the Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg.

“Our key contribution in the environmental sector where we have a range of programmes including the Working for Water which clears invasive alien plants that are sucking millions of litres of water in our rivers, has a long term benefit in our communities. That is what we mean by development,” he added. .

Henderson pointed out that it was important to highlight certain concepts in the objective of EPWP Phase 3.

“The challenge of unemployment in South Africa is structural. Our target as EPWP is the poor and unemployed people who are not skilled or who are lowly skilled. We are saying that we will provide income support, through work opportunities, to this group of people. To optimise the creation of these work opportunities, we must use labour-intensive methods. All this is to make a contribution to the development of our nation,” he stated.

Henderson pointed out that Public Employment Programmes (PEPs) in South Africa contributed immensely in tackling the challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty.

He quoted the National Development Plan (NDP) which states that Public Employment Programmes (EPPs) have a “key role” to play in the country’s plan to eradicate unemployment and poverty.

The NDP also states that: Given the objective to create 11 million jobs by 2030, there would be a shortfall of 3.3 million to meet the target, the deficit would have to be met through more than 5 million public works job opportunities per year in 2030 (compared to the current 500 000 and the targeted annual 1 million job opportunities).

According to Statistics South Africa’s latest figures, the country’s unemployment rate for the fourth quarter of 2014 dropped 1,1 percentage points to 24,3 percent.

Henderson further stated that the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2014 to 2019 prioritised the creation of decent jobs.

“The MTSF is important to us because it talks about our ability to ensure that we deliver on our annual EPWP targets,” he stated.

He said that the Public Employment Programme (PEP) Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) chaired by the Deputy President Mr Cyril Ramaphosa was a step in the right direction.

Henderson also hailed the formation of the MinMec platform which provides the Minister of Public Works Mr TW Nxesi with an opportunity to meet with MECs of Public Works departments in all provinces to discuss range of issues including EPWP.

He however raised a number of concerns including the failure by the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to reflect the contribution of PEPs as well as the need to improve EPWP’s internal accounting systems so as to not receive any negative mention by the Auditor General.



## Over 240 EPWP graduates to assist Government to spread social welfare services to Gauteng communities

By Michael Mokoena



Over 240 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants (caregivers) have been trained to assist the Gauteng Social Development Department to spread its basket of social services to all communities in the province.

On 09 March 2015 the 242 caregivers who participated in the Government’s Thogomelo Psycho-Social Well-Being Programme received certificates during their graduation ceremony which was held at Turfontein Race Course in Johannesburg.

The training was offered by National Institute Community Development and Management (NICDAM) and is accredited by the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) as a NQF Level 2 programme. “These graduates will help us to proactively provide services to our needy people. Whether it’s through the provision of food parcels to distressed families or the identification and assistance of needy children to get daily meals and even school uniforms”



"These EPWP graduates will be able to help the Department to provide services to our people in the Province," the Social Worker Manager EPWP in the Gauteng Department of Social Development Miss Bongi Buthelezi said.

"These EPWP caregivers will also be able to assist the Department on its programme for orphans and vulnerable children. If a child needs to be referred to a psychologist these caregivers will be able to do that. There's a host of other services these graduates will be able to do assist us with," she added. Buthelezi stated that the training that these EPWP participants underwent skilled them in various frontiers including in community profiling, community mapping, early identification of depression and burnout as well as on self-care and managing stress.

"For instance the module on self-care that they did focused at their own wellbeing – we believe that for the Department to effectively do its work of offering services to the vulnerable children and community members, our workforce (caregivers) must be healthy," Buthelezi said.

Another interesting module that the caregivers did is the psycho-social support for the bereaved families.

"This particular module exposed the caregivers to the Government's plan of assisting families - especially children - to cope in the event of the death of the parents. In a situation where a child resides with a terminally ill parent, these caregivers are able to work on the plan of how the child or children will survive after the parents have passed on. So indeed there's a lot of community benefit to this programme," she added.

Buthelezi explained that these graduates will go back to their NPOs located in areas such as the City of Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality as well as West Rand District Municipality to service thousands of community members who need Government social welfare services.

The Thogomelo Psycho-Social Well-Being Programme was conceptualised by the Health Development Africa (HDA) through the financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The curriculum development in partnership with the National Department of Social Development and it was the first programme on Psycho-Social Well-Being to be accredited in the country.

The National Department of Public Works (NDPW) facilitated funding for the Social Development's EPWP participants (caregivers) through the National Skills Fund.

The training itself was facilitated by NICDAM, one of the service providers tasked to develop the study material.

Five of these 242 graduates only received attendance certificates because they did not complete the programme.

The Deputy Director General (DDG) of EPWP in the national Department of Public Works, Mr Stanley Henderson congratulated the graduates.

"It is a wonderful day today (09 March 2015) because we are celebrating your hard work as EPWP participants. We are proud of you," he said.

"EPWP is Government's attempt to draw poor and unemployed people into the world of works. We afford those who participate in the programme an opportunity to undergo training. We want to see you move forward into the world of works," he said.

At the start of his speech, Henderson paid tribute to three of the EPWP trainees who passed on while they were enrolled in the programme.

He called for a moment of silence in remembrance of the "three fallen heroes" whose names are George Xolani Ngcambla, Solomon Tebogo Maheso and Jeanette Maletsatsi Senne.

The family members of these fallen heroes formed part of the graduation ceremony and were given certificates of their loved ones who had joined the training programme.

The Department of Social Development Deputy Director General Mr O.K Kabasia urged the graduates to keep moving forward and never give up in their dreams and aspirations.

Delivering his key note address, Kabasia advised the EPWP graduates to always work and learn as much as they can while they were still young. Occasionally he quoted from the Holy Bible to give inspiration to the hundreds of men and women who were clad in their black graduation gowns. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." "This EPWP training has given you hope and has given you the future. Be proud of your achievements today and go out there and contribute in making this country a better place," he added.

The caregivers expressed gratitude to the Government for having been selected to be part of the Thomelo Psycho Social Programme.

"EPWP has made us better people today. We are proud of being associated with this programme. We will use our newly acquired skills for betterment of our communities," the caregivers said.



# All municipalities to create EPWP work opportunities

By Michael Mokoena

The lives of hundreds of thousands of unemployed South Africans in our municipalities will change for the better as the Government has committed to extend its Community Work Programme to all 278 municipalities in the country.

This commitment was announced by the Minister of Finance Mr Nhlanhla Nene during his National Budget Speech that he tabled in Parliament on 25 February 2015. "Unemployment remains the country's single greatest economic and social challenge. Government continues to prioritise measures aimed at generating employment. These include tax incentives

for employment and investment, support for enterprise development, skills development and employment programmes," Minister Nene said.

He gave a financial boost to the Government's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) when he allocated R11.8 billion to the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) to fund more than 107 000 full time equivalent jobs and 224 000 work opportunities through EPWP in the environmental sector. "A total of R590 million has been allocated to the Green Fund over the medium term, for strategic environmental projects in partnership with the private sector," he said.

The Minister's pronouncement on EPWP displays the Government's commitment to using Public Employment Programmes (PEPs) to tackle unemployment in the country.

The Deputy Director General of EPWP in the Department of Public Works Mr Stanley Henderson welcomed the commitment to stretch EPWP to all municipalities in the country and said that this "is proof that this is a Government that cares for the poor and the unemployed".

The Deputy Minister Mr Jeremy Cronin said that the financial allocation announced by Minister Nene to DEA for the creation of EPWP work opportunities will also contribute to the Government's target of creating over a million EPWP work opportunities by the end of this financial years (March 2014/15) and the overall committed to create over 6 million EPWP work opportunities by 2019.

Minister Nene further announced that R10.2 billion has been allocated over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period to manufacturing development incentives and support for growing service industries, such as business process outsourcing.

He said that under the Minister of Trade and Industry Mr Rob Davies,

oversight, the manufacturing competitiveness enhancement programme will spend R5.4 billion and will assist 1 450 companies with financial support to upgrade facilities and skills development.

"Special economic zones are allocated R3.5 billion over the medium term, mainly for infrastructure development," the Minister said.

Minister Nene added that over the MTEF period, Minister of Small Business Development Miss Lindiwe Zulu's Department will spend R3.5 billion on mentoring and training support to small businesses.

"The Jobs Fund will spend R4 billion in partnership with the private sector on projects that create new employment, support work-seekers and address structural constraints to more inclusive growth," the Minister added. The latest unemployment figures from Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) revealed that more than 242,000 people became employed towards the end of 2014.

Stats SA added that South Africa's unemployment rate for the fourth quarter of 2014 dropped 1,1 percentage points to 24,3 percent.

## SONA 2015 – a ray of hope for millions of job seekers

By Michael Mokoena

The State President, honourable Jacob Zuma has expressed hope and confidence in Government's task of creating work opportunities for millions of South Africans.

Speaking in Parliament during the State of the Nations Address (SONA) on 12 February 2015, President Zuma said that "we are poised to meet the annual target of one million job opportunities."

"I announced a target of six million work opportunities over five years last year for the programme. We have thus far created more than 850 000 work opportunities. This means that we are poised to meet the annual target of one million job opportunities," President Zuma said.

The President was referring to the work opportunities created through the

Government's massive Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

President Zuma launched EPWP Phase 3 on the 1st of October 2014 where he committed the Government to creating over six (6) million work opportunities by 2019.

The President said that the EPWP environmental programmes such as Working on Waste, Working for Wetlands, Working for Water and Working on Fire have created more than 30 000 work opportunities since the launch of EPWP Phase 3 and that these programmes aim to create more than 60 000 during the next financial year.



The Deputy Director General of EPWP in the Department of Public Works Mr Stanley Henderson has welcome the inclusion of EPWP into SONA 2015.

“The President’s inclusion of EPWP in his address to the nation shows a high-level Government commitment to move millions of our people out of poverty through Government driven Public Employment Programmes (PEPs). We will continue to work harder as Government to create work opportunities for our unemployed people,” Henderson said.

President Zuma further said that on the employment front, the situation was more promising.

He quoted Statistics South Africa’s (Stats SA’s) latest employment figures which showed that more than 242,000 people became employed towards the end of 2014.

“The report shows that there are now 15,3 million people who are employed in South Africa. Jobs grew by 200 and 3000,” he said.

According to Stats SA, South Africa’s unemployment rate for the fourth quarter of 2014 dropped 1,1 percentage points to 24,3 percent.

The President added that Government’s investment in youth employment was also paying off.

“The Employment Tax Incentive, which was introduced last year directed mainly at the youth, is progressing very well...R2 billion has been claimed to date by some 29 000 employers, who have claimed for at least 270 000 young people,” he stated.

The President however warned that the country’s economy still needed a major boost. He then announced the Government’s bold nine point plan to ignite growth and create jobs.

The plan is extensive and covers a whole range of issues including:

- The resolution of the energy challenge.
- Revitalisation of the agriculture and the agro-processing value chain.
- Advancement of beneficiation or adding value to the country’s mineral wealth.

- The effective implementation of a higher impact Industrial Policy Action Plan.
- The encouragement of private sector investment.
- The moderation of workplace conflict.
- The unlocking of the potential of SMMEs, cooperatives, township and rural enterprises.
- State reform and boosting the role of state owned companies, ICT infrastructure or broadband roll out, water, sanitation and transport infrastructure.
- Operation Phakisa aimed growing the ocean economy and other sectors.

President Zuma pointed out that the National Infrastructure Development programme continues to be a key job driver and catalyst for economic growth.

He said that the Government, through the Department of Water and Sanitation, will train 15 000 artisans or plumbers who will fix leaking taps in their local communities.

He indicated that South Africa was losing R7 billion a year to water losses and that the programme of training the artisans would mitigate against this challenge.

“Progress is being made to improve the water supply to areas that had been affected by shortages, such as Makana District Municipality in the Eastern Cape, Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality in North West and Giyani in Limpopo where we celebrated the delivery of water to 55 villages in October last year,” President Zuma said

The President added that on the energy front, the National Department of Public Works has been given a directive to ensure that all government owned buildings are energy efficient.

## EPWP fights HIV/Aids stigma

By Michael Mokoena

“The stigma on HIV/Aids is gradually being erased in our community as a result of the hard work done by the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) foot soldiers who on a daily basis go out to our people to provide Home Community Based Care (HCBC) and awareness programme about this virus. We are indeed turning the corner when it comes to shattering the stigma and myths about this virus”.

The bold statement above was made by Babalwa Ngqakavu, the manager of the Never Give Up Support Group – a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) that does community works on HIV/Aids in the Dimbaza area near King Williamstown in the Eastern Cape.

“Although it is difficult to provide tangible proof about what I’m saying, the reality in our community is that people living with HIV are no longer so afraid to come out and seek help. They take their medication, they talk openly about the virus. With the help of EPWP, we informing and educating our people on HIV/Aids matters,” Ngqakavu adds.

The Never Give Up Support Group was initially established in 2003, it was an idea that was mainly meant to give support, empower and remove the stigma that is attached to people infected and those affected by the HIV/AIDS virus.

The organization is registered under the Company’s Act as a Non-Profit Organization; it services the community of Dimbaza and the

surrounding areas.

Due to the drastically growing rate of crime, teenage pregnancy, unemployment and people dying and leaving child headed households, Ngqakavu says, the organization grew from just being a support group for people living with HIV/AIDS to a community project that provides a support system to families of Dimbaza and surrounding rural areas under the Buffalo City Metro Municipality.

The organization is also assisting orphans and vulnerable children and child headed households by distributing food parcels, school uniforms, homework’s, house cleaning and application of foster care grants.



"It also helps people living with HIV/AIDS with information about the virus and instils hope in their lives through the support group meetings," Ngqakavu adds.

The beneficiaries of the services of the organisation are given skills in beadwork, food security and writing of Curriculum Vitae and at times this NPO provides nutritious meals, food supplements and food parcels to the members.

"We also visit schools to assist vulnerable children with their homework. We host indoor and outdoor games with the children so that they become mentally stable and physically fit," Ngqakavu points out.

The organisation has 36 (thirty six) caregivers who provide the community with services that it offers. Only 16 of the caregivers are EPWP participants with 10 of these receiving their monthly stipend of R1633 from the Department of Social Development and the other six receiving R1300 per month from the Department of Health.

The remaining caregivers have contracts with the Networking HIV, AIDS Community Of South Africa (NACOSA).

The organisation is funded by the Government and sponsors. Ngqakavu says that the organisation pays the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) contribution for the 10 EPWP participants who are affiliated with the Department of Social Development. She says that she too and the Administrator as well as the Finance Administrator for the NOP were also receiving a monthly stipends from the Department of Health.

"At this point we are not making UIF contributions for the 6 EPWP participants affiliated to Department of Health," she adds.

She then explains that the 6 caregivers from the Department of Health provide the community with palliative care, bedridden and health issues around the community.

"Nineteen (19 ) of our caregivers provide the community with psycho social support for the child headed households (CHH), orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and families that are in need. Ten (10) of the caregivers are focused at the NACOSA's Adherence programme," Ngqakavu explains.

She adds that other community services they offer include awareness workshops, nutrition or food support to vulnerable members of the community, and they have a bakery which they use to generate income as well as food security through their food garden.

The organisation does its work in various villages in the area including Madakeni and Mngqesha Ward 36, Polar Park Ward 34, Soweto Ward 36, Manningburg Ward 36, Thembisa Ward 34 and Dimbaza Central Ward 34.

Ngqakavu points out that the objectives of the centre include working towards curbing the spread of HIV/AIDS, TB in the community through DOT's and adherence.

"To defend our client and staff against all prejudice, stigma and discrimination. To provide psycho social support to orphans and vulnerable children, child headed households and families in need and to provide skills and job opportunities as well as to develop OVC in all aspects (e.g.) mentally, physically and socially".

### Training for EPWP Participants

The caregivers at the centre are trained on counselling, first aid, home based care and treatment literacy that help the NPO's beneficiaries

with the best possible assistance required.

"Our caretakers take their time to serve the community with dignity and without any complaints," Ngqakavu adds.

### EPWP Participants

The 37-year-old Thandiswa Dyantyi, one of the EPWP participants at the centre thanked the Government for giving her an opportunity to make a positive contribution in the lives of her community.

"We serve rural surroundings in Dimbasae and some of our community members are too sick to get to medical centres such as clinics and hospitals. So as caregivers we have been great help to these community members and their families," she adds.

Dyantyi provides the psycho-social services and home based care to her community.

"The centre has provided me with skills to look after my community. I'm happy to be part of EPWP at the centre," she adds.

Another participant Melikhaya Saliman joined the centre in 2013 as an EPWP participant.

"I'm one of the caregivers who visit schools to educate and inform the children about HIV/Aids and other social challenges. The monthly stipend that I receive has made me a better man in my family and in my community. I can now look after those I love most with this money. We indeed thank the Government for EPWP," he adds.

### Community

One community member, Gciniwe Mantambo, 56, praised the work of EPWP participants at the centre.

"As a community we are grateful for the services we receive from the Never Give Up Support Centre. Their EPWP participants visit our homes and look after the sickly while also advising us on how we should protect ourselves from illnesses such as HIV/Aids," she explains.

She adds that the food that they also received from the centre helped to put hunger at bay in the community.

The Never Give Up Support Group work with a range of stakeholders including various Government Departments, the private sector, donor organizations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other NPOs.



# EPWP participates in Mangaung Youth Empowerment Week

By Faith Nonyana and Emmanuel Jiyane



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participated in Mangaung Youth Empowerment Week (MYEW) exhibition that took place in Mangaung, at Hoffman Square from 3 March 2015 to 06 March 2015 hosted by Artkulay Company.

The theme of the exhibition was “Creating solid partnership to empower youth”.

The Deputy Minister of Small Business Development, Elizabeth Thabethe attended the event and was accompanied by the Small Enterprise Development Agency (Seda) Provincial Manager, Jackie Ntshingila and Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality’s member of the Mayoral committee Moneheng Tsomela.

In her address to thousands of young entrepreneurs who attended the event, Thabethe highlighted the establishment of youth co-operatives.

“I want you as youth to follow-up on this dialogue, as you even got details of relevant people to talk to and as department we should encourage establishment of youth co-operatives in the energy sector,” Thabethe said.

In addition, Thabethe said her Department would help identify relevant stakeholders to partner with youth Directorate. She said that she expected the youth to visit state entities that will help develop their businesses. Thabethe also encouraged the youth not to overlook agriculture and only think that it is a rural issue that they cannot involve themselves into.

“The agriculture sector has a space for young people who want to pursue their businesses and careers – that industry must not be taken granted,” she stated.

Thabethe also had an opportunity to interact with the young entrepreneurs at the event.

Jackie Ntshingila said young people should be exposed to entrepreneurship at an early age, “We need to start a programme which will take entrepreneurship to the learners at primary school level” she added.



The event was also attended by over 5000 high school learners and unemployed youth from various parts of the Free State Province.

At the exhibition stands, Government institutions provided the attendees with information on various issues including bursaries, careers and learnership programmes.

The learners and unemployed were satisfied with the answers they obtained from professionals who manned different stalls. Since most of the learners didn’t have adequate information on how to choose a career, they got to learn more about Government programmes such as EPWP – a programme aimed at providing the poor and unemployed with short to medium term work opportunities.

The young people also got to learn that EPWP provides skills to the lowly and unskilled people through the Vuk’phile learnerships and National Youth Services (NYS).

Through these exhibitions and conferences, young people of Mangaung had an opportunity to enhance their knowledge in business and discover what government institutions and companies can offer to boost their enterprises.

The event also had other activities such as interactions between young entrepreneurs, corporates, government and civil society.

The event was very successful as it brought useful information to the youth of Free State.



# Mareetsane Wetlands Project awarded second runner up in the 2013/14 Working for Wetlands Best Project Award Ceremony

By Faith Nonyana and Emmanuel Jiyane



Mareetsane Wetlands Rehabilitation Project has been awarded second “2nd” Runner up in the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) Best Project Awards 2013-2014. This Project is one of the 40 Projects throughout the Country which were selected to compete for the best Project Award.

The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) Best Project Awards was first held in 2007 with the aim of acknowledging, awarding and recognising hard work in Working for Wetlands projects.

In 2012, the Mareetsane project coordinators held a meeting with Chief Motshegare and the traditional council to get the two parties (Chief Motshegare and traditional council) to be part of the project.

Chief Motshegare, the traditional council as well as the project coordinators later met with the community to take them through the process of employment. Three community members – Mr Gaopalelwe Mosoeu, Mr Titi Moroe and Mr Piet Lobase - were then appointed as contractors.

Other community members were appointed through the assistance of the local councillor and the traditional council. Since the objective of the programme is to alleviate poverty and transfer skills for sustainable development, community members from poor households were recruited. A total of 38 community members were employed including contractors, 2 security personnel and 33 workers.

They were then divided into three groups (or teams) were trained in various skills including first aid, health and safety as well as fire fighting. These teams were also introduced to site activities, earth works, fencing, gabion, stone masonry and concrete structures and through the leadership of the Project Manager (Thomas Moloi) and the Rainbow Moon Trading (RMT). The work that these community workers did was mainly in the civil construction industry.

The contractors were assisted to register close corporation, SARS Tax Clearance, UIF, Workmen's Compensation and CIDB with the aim of helping them to so they can learn to manage small businesses. The teams worked on a task based basis, work quantified and norm applied to determine number of days for the structure and paid once completed and inspected. All workers were remunerated according to the ministerial determination guideline for wages and their stipends were paid directly into their individual bank accounts.

The teams learned the work faster in the first financial year of the project 2012 to 2013. Due to the reduction in the work at the side, in the 2013 to 14 financial year the teams were reduced to 2 (groups/teams) with a total of 28 participants. These community members were trained on accredited construction modules to further enhance their knowledge. The two teams completed the work allocated to them in time and impeccably.



# EPWP 2014 Summit Resolutions



In a bid to effectively drive the implementation of the Government's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) at local government level, the National Department of Public Works (NDPW) wants all EPWP municipal policies to be endorsed by 30 June this year.

This is one of the key resolutions that were adopted at the EPWP 2014 National Summit held in Pretoria in November.

The delegates who attended the Summit made it clear that municipalities remain the hotbed for growth in the employment of South Africans through the Public Employment Programme (PEP).

- The summit resolved that municipalities therefore should continue to prioritise EPWP in their Integrated Development Programme (IDP).
- The summit further resolved that to maximise the capacities of municipality to create more jobs, the National Department of Public Works will continue to provide technical support to these municipalities.
- "The summit notes progress made in appointing dedicated officials by municipalities at appropriate level of seniority for EPWP. The summit

resolves that all spheres of Government should that there is dedicated capacity to coordinate and implement EPWP," the minutes of the summit states.

- The summit resolved that all protocols should be signed by 30 June 2015. "Progress on the implementation of protocols agreements should be monitored and sent to municipal councils on a quarterly basis".

The delegates also emphasised training of the EPWP participants. "The summit resolves that the National Department of Public Works (NDPW) and all lead sector departments should continue to liaise with relevant stakeholders to source funding for training and ensure that quality training is provided to EPWP beneficiaries. Lead sector departments should encourage Public bodies to set aside part of their budget to fund training of participants on their projects."

- The summit further resolved that the NDPW and all lead sector departments should continue to provide technical support to all spheres of government to promote the implementation of the EPWP in the use of the labour-intensive methods, promotion of community involvement, sustainable livelihoods and convergence.
- The Programme would be governed by four principles – adherence to minimum wage and employment conditions under the Ministerial Determination; clearly defined worker selection criteria and contributions to the public goods and assets in communities.
- On record keeping, the delegates resolved that public bodies should continue to ensure that there's proper record management for EPWP projects. "The Summit notes the efforts made by municipalities in ensuring proper record management on their EPWP projects to comply with audit requirements of the Auditor General's Office."
- The Summit also tasked the NDPW to continue to strengthen the coordination between municipalities, NPOs and implementing agents so as to promote the implementation of the Non-State Sector.

The summit was a success as it was attended by over 600 officials including senior politicians. It was addressed by both the Minister of Public Works T W Nxesi and Deputy Minister Jeremy Cronin.





# Gallery

