

Department of Public Works launches programme to assist EPWP participants to set up small businesses

Article by Michael Mokoena

Pictures by Mbulelo Ntsetshe



The Department of Public Works (DPW) has – through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) – launched a programme to encourage and assist its participants to set up their own small businesses. The EPWP Enterprise Development Programme was launched in September 2017 in Kimberley in the Northern Cape. The two day launch of the Programme (Enterprise Development) started with a visit to EPWP supported cooperatives in villages around Kuruman in the Northern Cape.

The launch and site visits were led by the Deputy Director General (DDG) of the EPWP in the National Department of Public Works, Mr Stanley Henderson who stated that the aim of the Programme (Enterprise Development) was to assist EPWP participants to start their own cooperatives. “Once the cooperatives have been set up, our Enterprise Development Unit support them by not only linking them with various government agencies for funding but also by assisting them to identify markets to sell their products or produce. The aim is to contribute towards sustainable livelihood of our participants,” Mr Henderson said. He pointed out that the launch was also intended to come up with practical solutions to the challenges that are faced by the small businesses that are supported by the government through the EPWP.

Although the Programme (Enterprise Development) was launched earlier this month (September), the work of encouraging and supporting EPWP participants to start their own cooperatives has been ongoing in the department. During the 2016/17 financial year, the EPWP supported 316 small businesses across the country. The type of cooperatives that are assisted and supported includes food garden cooperatives, cleaning cooperatives and road maintenance cooperatives.

Mr Henderson said that the government – through various departments and entities – will continue to work harder to encourage and assist EPWP participants to set-up small businesses. “It must be stressed that the success of this Programme is as a result of our collaborative work with all national and provincial government departments including Small Business Development, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Labour, Tourism and state owned entities such as Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) as well as local and district municipalities.”

The kind of assistance offered through this initiative include helping cooperatives improve business management and operations, assisting cooperatives with registration and statutory compliance and referring EPWP participants and cooperatives to other enterprise development agencies for further support and assistance.

Participants’ Testimonials

The participants whose cooperatives have been supported through the EPWP Enterprise Development Programme expressed gratitude to the government.

Ms Masego Tatisi – a participant of the Kgatelo Pele Sewing Cooperative in Bothitong in Kuruman who was given new industrial sewing machines by the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) said the EPWP contributed in the socio-economic upliftment of her community.

“We are currently producing clothes for our local community in Bothitong. Some of the items we are producing include school clothes for the children in the area. We are looking at producing work clothes such as overalls,” she said. The DSBD has also given the cooperative a container to use as an office space.

Ms Keatlaletse Molema of the Tshwelelang agricultural cooperative in Gamothibi village in Kuruman also thanked the department for the EPWP enterprise development assistance.



Minister Nhleko honours women in EPWP who contribute in the fight against the abuse of women and children

By Michael Mokoena
Pictures by Emmanuel Jiyane



The Minister of Public Works, Mr Nkosinathi Nhleko honoured women who - through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) – play a leading role in the fight against social injustice and the abuse of women and children.

“The women we are referring to, include those who work with the Nomaxabiso White Door Centre of Hope - a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) - in Whittlesea in the Eastern Cape. These women – who include Ms Nqwenela Vabuhlungu, Ms Zoleka Mtshiselwa and Ms Daniswa Ndanda - work as abuse survivor counsellors for the NGO. They work with local communities and the police in the fight against the abuse of women and children in the villages around Whittlesea in the Eastern Cape,” Minister Nhleko said recently.

He further stated that “these women are emulating women leaders like Charlotte Maxeke, Lillian Ngoyi, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Bertha Gxowa, Rahima Moosa, Sister Bernard Ncube and thousands of women who fought against social injustice and for the freedom we enjoy today.

Speaking to EPWP News, Ms Nqwenela Vabuhlungu stated that she and her colleagues at the NGO work with community structures such as community policing forum, ward committees and faith based organisations to get members of the public to be active participants in this fight against the abuse of women and children.

“We have also established support groups for both men and women to mobilise communities around this challenge to fight against this problem,” she said.

Ms Vabuhlungu states that part of their daily activities is to provide counselling to survivors of abuse before they (survivors) open police cases.

“We have provided counselling to hundreds of women and children who have been raped, physically and emotionally abused. When dealing with survivors, it is important to make them feel comfortable to talk about their ordeal. Once a survivor is comfortable and has been able to unburden, we link them with the police to report their cases. Counselling for survivors is important because it contributes to the building-up of a strong case against the alleged perpetrator,” Ms Vabuhlungu explains.

She adds that once they have counselled survivor, they refer them to the Department of Social Development (DSD) for further professional attendance and support.

Having worked for the NGO for over four years, Ms Vabuhlungu urges victims/ survivors to never tolerate abuse of any kind from anyone. “Once your partner abuses you or your children – get out of that relationship! In fact, experience has taught me that once the abuse starts it never stops,” she emphasised.

The activities that the NGO does include working with DSD in the identification of children and women that must be placed in homes of safety as well as doing awareness campaigns on women and children abuse.

The manager of the NGO Mr Zamikhaya Twane – who is also an EPWP participant – said the monthly stipend they were receiving from the Department of Public Works has assisted them (participants) to provide for their loved ones.

The Domestic Violence Coordinator at the Whittlesea Police Station Constable Ntombekhaya Jaceni stated that the NGO has played a vital role in assisting the police to get quality information from survivors of abuse. “We also work with the NGO in their awareness and door to door campaigns,” she added.

The Deputy Director General (DDG) for EPWP in the Department of Public Works, Mr Stanley Henderson explained that there were thousands of EPWP projects and programmes countrywide that contribute in the empowerment and protection of women and children. “These programmes include food gardening projects where rural women assist in the nutritional support of poor households in their communities; school support projects where women are assisting school children with homework and also cook for them. There are also EPWP projects where women are looking after the elderly, sickly and orphans in their communities,” he said.

He added that the role of women in the EPWP contributes immensely in the protection and upliftment of millions of our people, particularly women and children. The EPWP will continue to work with women in our communities to change lives for the better.



Expanded Public Works Programme is changing lives of the women in Northern Cape for the better

Article by Kgomotso Mathuloe

Pictures by Nomazulu Sibanda



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) introduced the Enterprise Development Programme in 2009 when the phase 2 of the Programme was launched. The aim of the Enterprise programme is to support EPWP participants in their quest to start and operate businesses.

Introduced as part of the EPWP exit strategy, the participants are supported to start and register their businesses, assisted to develop marketing plan, access to the market, costing of products and financial planning.

One of the beneficiaries of this Programme is SAMMA Agricultural cooperative in Legobate village outside Kuruman, Northern Cape. According to the project manager of the cooperative, Ms Kegomoditswe Gaokgete, the cooperative was registered in 2015 as a Poultry farming project. "We are five members, four females and one male. Two of the five cooperative members are youth."

Ms Gaokgete said that before the cooperative was formed, she worked in an EPWP project under the Independent Development Trust (IDT) where she worked in Poultry production. It was through this project that they gained the skills to start their own businesses.

"EPWP has assisted me a lot, thanks to Ms Nomazulu Sibanda, (Manager responsible for Enterprise Development in Northern Cape), I am currently on a 12 month learnership in poultry production. We started this learnership three months ago and it will assist us to grow our business."

According to Ms Sibanda, this learnership is funded by AgriSETA through the Northern Cape Further Education and Training College. The Learnership is on poultry production and it commenced in May 2017. The aim of the learnership is to teach the participants poultry production and marketing skills so that they are able to run a sustainable project.

Ms Gaokgete said that they sell the chickens at South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) pension pay-points and also at the local Supermarket. They are also negotiating with Boxer Supermarket in Kuruman to supply the chicken to the retailer, but the challenge is that they do not have a place to slaughter and package the chickens.

Through the EPWP Enterprise Programme, the cooperative was assisted to get the Chicken house. "An application for funding was

submitted on behalf of the cooperative to the Department of Small Business Development for a Cooperative Incentive Scheme (CIS) grant fund. An amount of R264 911 was approved by the Department to construct a modern chicken house, purchase chicken feed, medication and 2000 chicks." Ms Sibanda said.

Ms Gaokgete added that one of the challenges that they are currently facing is lack of electricity, "We need electricity to keep the chicken warm. The office of the Premier and Mmre ka Thusa Trust Fund has promised to fund the installation of electricity. We are hoping that this will be done as soon as possible because our chickens are dying due to cold weather."

She also said they need Chicken automatic egg incubator machine which will help them to produce their chicken instead of buying chicks from the supplier. This will also ensure that they employ more people currently they have employed 8 people in the project.

Ms Sibanda concluded by saying this project has a potential not only to generate income but create sustainable jobs for the participants.



EPWP engage experts on social protection roundtable discussion

Article by: Lesego Moretlwe

Pictures by: Michael Mokoena



The Department of Public Works through its Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) has on 31 August 2017 hosted the roundtable discussion at St George Hotel, Pretoria in Gauteng.

This roundtable discussion was an initiative of the EPWP Knowledge Management sub-directorate within the EPWP Partnership Support Chief Directorate and it was held under the theme "Social protection-the link to Public Employment Programmes (PEPs).

The aim of this interactive session was to get different perspectives around the stated theme from the panelists who represented institutions such as government, civil society and academia. The aim was to focus on collective learning through engagement and discussions and how best to leverage benefit of Public Employment Programmes by among others:

1. Creating value from the organisations intellectual assets
2. Propagating knowledge and
3. Integrating knowledge sharing into EPWP's work environment.

When she explained the meaning of social protection, Ms Brenda Sibeko, who works as Chief Director: Social protection at the Department of Social Development said social protection is about the inclusive system especially for low income groups to ensure minimum level of protection. She has also recommended that all sectors must focus on 18-59 year old who are neither working nor in any social security system. A need has also been identified to come up with phased income support based on available resources and have active labour market interventions such as allowances linked to skills development and the Expanded Public Works Programme.

Mr Afsaw Kidanu of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and a specialist on Employment Intensive Investment Programme said "It is important to anchor PEP to the national or local development policies and plans in order to realise its full benefits".

Ms Isobel Frye who is the Director of the Studies in poverty and inequality Institute (SPII) who talked to civil society perspective on social protection emphasised the significance outcome 23 of the National Development plan (NDP) which is an inclusive and responsive social protection system.

The common elements which emanated from the panelists is that South Africa still has triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality which need to be addressed collectively by government, civil society and all the institutions contributing to the economy.

The EPWP continue to uphold its mandate of alleviating poverty and unemployment through the provision of work opportunities and income relief to the poor and unemployed South Africans.

In his closing remarks, the EPWP Deputy Director General, Mr Stanley Henderson acknowledged the contributions made during the discussions and indicated that PEPs need to position key development interventions and pave the way forward for improved implementation of the Programme.



City of Ekurhuleni hosts Vu'kuphile Round Table discussion meeting

Article by Michael Mokoena
Pictures by Michael Mokoena



The City of Ekurhuleni has recently held a Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme Round Table meeting at the Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre in Benoni, Gauteng. The aim of the meeting was to provide learner contractors and supervisors who are being trained through the Programme with valuable information about the civil construction sector. Information that was imparted to participants included legislation governing the construction sector; labour relations matters as well as issues relating to taxes and company registrations.

The 206 participants are part of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality's Community Empowerment Programme (CEP). "Through the CEP, we aim to facilitate and promote economic transformation, build an inclusive economy that would contribute in the socio-economic advancement of our region," the municipality's Cibert Lebeso said. He added that the Expanded Public Works Programme's (EPWP's) Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme formed an integral part of the municipality's CEP.

The participants who attended the meeting received motivational talk from a graduate of the Programme, Mr Modise Motsoane whose company currently does work on building low cost and middle income houses in Lesotho. "Motsoane, who exited the Programme in 2014 told the participants that: "The construction sector is an exciting field that has many great opportunities. However you must be willing to work very hard. At times you will be demotivated because of work scarcity but if you work hard you will be rewarded," he said.

He advised participants not to misuse the monies they would have accumulated whilst in the Programme.

"By the time some of you exit the Programme, you will be having good bank balances. Do not spend that money on the 'niceties of life'. Remember that once you exit the Programme you will be on your own, so use that money to look for work. At times you can find work after a year of having left the Programme, you will need those savings as a start-up capital in the work that would have been given to you," Mr Motsoane said.

Mr Motsoane entered the Programme knowing nothing about civil construction, but today his company, Puledi Construction is on Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) level 7.

Delivering his speech at the event, the Director of Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme in the Department of Public Works Mr Thembani Mackaukau urged the participants to learn as much as they could about the construction sector. "Use this Programme to network and advance yourselves. Most importantly, when you are given work, do it to your utmost best – your work must speak for you. It must be able to get you more jobs after you have exited from the Programme," he said.

Mackaukau added that the number of learner contractors that have been trained through the Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme will now increase to 986 since the start of Vuk'uphile.

Participants' Testimonials

The meeting came as the participants had just completed their theoretical training and are soon to be given practical work by the municipality. One of the participants, Ms Mpho Moloi said the Programme has taught her a lot about the construction sector. "We have learned a lot in class about the civil construction sector. We are now looking forward to applying what we have learned in the real world of work," she said.



The EPWP Artisan Development Programme - positively impacts participants!

Article by Godfrey Maphanga
Pictures by Godfrey Maphanga



Several studies have proven that the shortage of skills across the country still remains at a peak. In an effort to address this skills gap, the Department of Public Works through its Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) branch partnered with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (MerSETA) to implement the EPWP Artisan Development Programme. This programme is aimed at targeting artisan trade opportunities within the Manufacturing, Engineering and Motor industries. One of the participants who benefited from the programme is Mr Tebogo Philly Leboro, a competent 28 years old young man born and bred in, Setumo Park Village, Mahikeng in the North West Province.

He started his primary education at D.P. Kgotleng Primary in Mahikeng, later went to Memorial Middle School and he completed his matric at Boitsanape Technical High School in 2007. His passion has always revolved around the engineering field, and during his secondary education he was encouraged to choose technical subjects where without any doubt stated that "I chose Mathematics, Physical Science, Technical Drawing and Electrical Engineering." My desire for engineering related studies was nurtured in such a way that even after completing my matric with my technical background I enrolled for N2-N4 Electrical Engineering Programme at Taletso Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) College in Mahikeng" he explained.

He continued to say: "After completing my N4 Electrical Engineering Programme in 2009 I became unemployed and started looking for job opportunities around. I used to think that the EPWP was only about working and cleaning around communities, until I saw an opportunity from one of the local newspapers "Mahikeng Mail".

"The opportunity was for the EPWP National Youth Service (NYS) Programme and they were looking for unemployed youth to partake in the various infrastructure programmes. I applied, got shortlisted, and attended the interviews where I became successful, and this was the beginning of my journey" Mr Leboro highlighted.

He was placed at 10 South African Infantry (SAI) for one year at EPWP NYS programme mainly focusing on the repairs and maintenance of plumbing at the battalion. During this period he attended an accredited Plumbing Course at Ramosadi Community Center, which made him to be more skilled on the job. It did not end there, he also obtained another opportunity through the EPWP NYS programme to be trained by Actom John Thompson for an accredited boiler making course and he was placed at Bophelong Provincial Hospital as a boiler-operator for 18 months, servicing the boilers and also doing the repairs from time to time.



After such exposure he and his friend decided to open a consortium named “Ultra-Company” which targeted odd jobs for plumbing and electrical works in order to get income to sustain themselves and assist people in their community.

In 2014, he was recruited from the EPWP NYS database for the Artisan Development Programme. The minimum entry requirements were matric, with Mathematics, Physical Science and English or N2 with a trade. Briefing sessions for career guidance were held with all the learners in order to create awareness of the EPWP Artisan Development Programme and for them to make informed decision on the identified trade before commencement of the training.

The merSETA identified registered employers to employ learners on a temporary basis. The learners were provided with theoretical, practical and on-job training under a qualified mentor for a period of 3 to 4 years in order to qualify as artisans in various trades.

“I was contacted by Mafikeng Toyota, for an interview on the Auto-Electrician Trade; after a week I received a call that I was one of the successful candidates; and I got registered as an apprentice. This was a life time changing opportunity ever received as I always had a desire to continue with my academic studies and become a qualified artisan.”

The Skills Development Facilitator (SDF) for Mafikeng Toyota Ms Natasja Dames from Gikelele Consulting indicated that Mr Leboro was “recruited due to his extensive electrical background.”

“It has been a long journey and I started in the Programme 2015. Initially I was struggling as this was not an easy trade, it needed lots of hard work together with commitment but finally I adjusted very well in the Programme” Mr Leboro explained.

At the end of the Programme, the apprentices are required to undergo a trade test at an accredited trade test centre in order to qualify as artisans. The way to the trade test is always not an easy journey but due to his passion and dedication to his work he is now a proudly qualified artisan in the Auto Electrician Trade; and he qualified in 2017.

“Some of the activities carried out by Auto Electricians are to overhaul and repair all electrical systems on a vehicle. This also includes maintaining of all systems i.e. headlight adjustment, re-wiring of circuits, setting engine timing, battery maintenance etc. During the apprenticeship period I was paid a wage by Mafikeng Toyota for food and transport. This wage was to ease the financial burden during my studies and I will forever be grateful for this opportunity” Mr Leboro pointed out.

Monitoring was jointly conducted by the North West Training Unit and merSETA on a quarterly basis in order to ensure that the Programme achieves its desired goals.

“I would like to advise other young people to identify and take up such opportunities and utilise them fully whenever they arise so that they can also make impact in their various communities” Mr Leboro said.

He added that the “the EPWP Artisan Development Programme has opened more opportunities for me; and I have now been given another opportunity to study as a Diesel Mechanic by Mafikeng Toyota; this is only through hard-work and commitment. Thank you to the EPWP for this life changing opportunity.

The Director: EPWP Beneficiary Training; Ms Cinderella Makunike expressed words of gratitude to the merSETA, Mafikeng Toyota and the DHET/NSF for the cooperation shown in implementing this programme. She quoted Maya Angela who once said ‘I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better’.

“I was contacted by Mafikeng Toyota, for an interview on the Auto-Electrician Trade; after a week I received a call that I was one of the successful candidates; and I got registered as an apprentice. This was a life time changing opportunity ever received as I always had a desire to continue with my academic studies and become a qualified artisan.”



EPWP's Environmental Monitors Programme contribute to anti-Rhino poaching in the country

Article by Michael Mokoena
Pictures by Michael Mokoena



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Environmental Monitors programme continues to play a significant role in the fight against rhino poaching, the Director for EPWP in the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) Mr Pitso Mojaelo said recently. Speaking on the side-lines of a two-day site visit to EPWP Environment and Culture Sector projects in KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Mojaelo explained that since the launch of the Programme in 2013, the government has been able to minimise the rhino poaching cases. Although he did not provide figures about the drop in the rate of poaching, Mr Mojaelo stated that: "there has indeed been a drop in such incidents."

He stated that part of the activities that participants did in the fight against rhino poaching is patrolling and being spotters on the parks where they are based. "The environmental monitors are the eyes and ears at our parks... When they hear or see suspicious activities on the park they report it to their managers who then deploy armed patrol to attend to it. The participants also work with the armed patrollers to patrol the facility where they are based," Mr Mojaelo explained. He said the Programme's three main objectives were environmental monitoring, law enforcement and biodiversity monitoring.

Mr Mojaelo explained that the Programme has contributed in the socio-economic upliftment of local communities. "As part of the government's wildlife economy initiative, this Programme has been able to improve the lives of many young people and not only through monthly wages that they are receiving, but also through the training they are exposed to. For instance, at the Spioenkop Game Reserve, some of the participants have even received training at tertiary institutions," he said.

Mr Mojaelo also highlighted the importance of the Programme in building relations between nature reserves and communities where they are located. "Since young people that are employed at these nature reserves come from local communities, they (local communities) see them (nature reserves) as part of the community," he added.

The environmental monitors are placed at various parks and nature reserves across the country. The environmental monitor Programme is implemented by DEA with the assistance of South African National Parks (SANParks), together with various privately owned nature reserves. In KwaZulu-Natal, the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife also assist in

the rolling out of the Programme. Participants are placed at various nature reserves such as Spioenkop Game Reserve, Giant Castle Nature Reserve and Weenen Game Reserve – all of which are in the Drakensberg area.

Some of the activities undertaken by participants include tackling soil erosion, fixing and maintaining infrastructure such as roads and buildings as well as removing invasive alien plants. The participants are registered for the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) as well as Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (Coida). They receive monthly wages of R159.00.

The manager of the Weenen Game Reserve Mr Frik Lemmer said the Programme had been able to provide local community with the much needed jobs in the rural areas around the reserve. "Majority of young people in these neck of the woods are unemployed and uneducated, so the Programme has been able to provide those young people with hope for a better tomorrow," he said.

He also urged the government to reconsider recruiting even young people who do not have matric qualifications into the Programme. "Most of the youth in this area do not have a matric qualification and they are locked out of developmental programmes such as these," Lemmer added.

Participants' Testimonials

Ms Ayanda Mtshali – one of the participants at Spioenkop Game Reserve stated that the Programme has provided her with valuable skills on the protection of rhinos. "I joined the Programme in December 2016 after graduating at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) where I was studying Nature Conservation. My participation in the Programme is assisting me to learn more about nature conservation work as well as rhino protection. I believe that the experience that I am getting from participating in the Programme will assist me to find permanent job in this sector," she explained.

For Ms Thandiwe Nzimande, the Programme has built her confidence to do public speaking. "One of the activities we do is to host public meetings and school visits to talk about the importance of nature conservation – this has continued to build my confidence," she said. She added that the monthly wages she received helped her to provide for her loved ones.

The Nkangala District Municipality hosts EPWP graduation ceremony

By Emmanuel Jiyane
Pictures by Emmanuel Jiyane



The Nkangala District Municipality held Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) exit workshop on 14 July 2017 in Middleburg, Mpumalanga where 160 EPWP participants exited the Programme. The participants were trained in various trades such as Wholesale & Retail; Tourism, Food and Beverages; Security and Gardening. Each trade trained 40 participants.

Delivering the key note address at the event, the Executive Mayor of the district municipality, councillor Linah Malatjie praised the role played by the EPWP in the improvement of the lives of young people in the area.

"The EPWP remains one of the core government Programmes that are aimed at addressing our triple challenges of inequality, unemployment and poverty," she said.

She added that the participants who were exiting the Programme had learned a lot and done very well in their respective trades.

The 160 participants were from six local municipalities within the district. They were trained through various SETAs including Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) as well as Culture, Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSETA).



Participants' Testimonials

Some of the participants who received training as security officers have been employed permanently by the Bidvest Protea Coin. One of the participants, Mr Mlungisi Skosana, from Mhluzi in Middleburg said that he had learned a lot in the EPWP security programme. "Had it not for this Programme, I would still be unemployed. In fact I can gladly say that the EPWP has been a stepping stone for me to enter into permanent employment," Mr Skosana said.

Mr Skosana, added that whilst in the Programme, he managed to use his monthly wage to obtain a driver's license. "Other than that, the monthly wage I earned helped to take care of my loved ones," he added.

For 30-year-old Mr Jafta Mahlangu from Siyabuswa, participating in the EPWP's tourism food and beverages programme was a blessing as he had been unemployed before joining the Programme.

"I started participating in June 2016. My duties included cooking, catering, and cleaning services at the guest house where I was doing my practical work. Before I joined the Programme I had completed Level 4 in Boiler Making at CN Mahlangu College in Siyabuswa. I am happy for having participated in the EPWP and I will be registering my company soon and I wish to own a guest house one day" he added.

Some of the participants who were being trained in the tourism and hospitality programme were placed at Kgarebana Boutique Bed & Breakfast in Tweefontein. The owner of the bread and breakfast facility Ms Angelinah Marothi said the participants did their work very well. "I have also noticed a few of the participants that I am considering employing permanently once I have vacancies," she added.



EPWP youth initiative provide a personal development

Article by Emmanuel Jiyane
Pictures by Emmanuel Jiyane



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) exited 425 participants who were participating in the National Youth Service (NYS) programme during August 2017. The participants were exited through various exit workshops held across the country. Speaking at the exit workshop that was held in Cape Town on 25 August 2017, the Director of NYS in the National Department of Public Works Ms Tebogo Phiri said “NYS will provide a long-term and effective means of reconstructing South African society whilst at the same time developing the abilities of young people through service and learning. NYS distinguishes itself from other youth development initiatives by emphasising community service, structured learning, personal development and preparation of the youth for sustainable livelihoods or exit opportunities”.

Ms Phiri explained that to date the programme has successfully trained youth in various construction trades such as plumbing, electrical, bricklaying, painting etc. “The programme continues to find innovative means to train youth outside the traditional construction trades as was observed in the Cape Town Parliamentary Village Project under the facilities management contract,” she added.

Below is the list of graduate workshops that were held in August 2017:

Provinces (Mpumalanga)	Trades	Number of participants exited
Standerton	Community House Building (CHB)	21
Ermelo	Community House Building (CHB), Plumbing	75
Barberton	Electrical (Refrigeration)	15
Macadamia	Community House Building (CHB),	10

(Nelspruit Kabokweni, Graniet)	Community House Building (CHB),	55
Kwaggafontein	Install glazing, Building using Solid hallow units, Set out concrete strip foundation, erect rood structure, apply screeds to a concrete floor and clad roof structure.	20
Middleburg and Witbank	Electrical, Aircorn and Community House Building (CHB)	54
Western Cape	Armament Fitter, Automotive Electrician, Blacksmith, Bricklayer, Carpenter and Joiner, Diesel Mechanic, Electrical Fitter, Electrician, Electronics Mechanician	100
Gauteng	Bricklaying, plastering, plumbing and solar energy	55
Northern Cape	Electrical, Aircorn and Community House Building (CHB)	20
Total number of participants exited		425

Participants' Testimonials

For 21-year-old Mr Thembinkosi Sidu from Ermelo in Mpumalanga, participating in the Programme has been an exciting experience.

“I joined the programme while I was doing an electrical engineering N4 certificate. The Programme gave me an experience in the field of electrical engineering, ceiling installation, plumbing and painting. This experience assisted me to find employment as a general worker at List Chemical Cleaning in Secunda,” Mr Sidu explained.

He encouraged young people who were currently unemployed to take advantage of government programmes such as the NYS. “When I joined the Programme, some people in my community thought I’m wasting my time; little did they know that I will acquire skills and a certificate in Various artisan trades. I believe that in life everyone has to start somewhere and work their way to the top,” Mr Sidu added.

Another participant Mr Jabu Mabuza (27) said that he has been in the programme for about two years. Before he joined the programme he was studying towards an electrical engineering (N6) certificate with Tshwane South College (TSC). “The work experience I received from the Programme assisted me to apply for my National Diploma and graduate. Today my life has changed for the better - I am marketable as a qualified artisan. My future plan is to set up a small electrical company,” he added.

Gallery



