



Government created close to 1 million EPWP work opportunities during 2020/21 financial year

Article by Michael Mokoena

Pictures by Maanea Maselesele



With Covid-19 health pandemic leading to mass job losses globally and in the country, the Government will continue to use programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) to provide work opportunities to poor and unemployed South Africans so as to contribute towards the alleviation of poverty and reduction of unemployment.

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) as the lead coordinator of the EPWP is proud to announce that the government has created a total of 938 688 EPWP work opportunities during the 2020/21 financial year (from April 2020 to March 2021). These work opportunities were created through 13 496 EPWP projects implemented across four EPWP Sectors, namely Infrastructure, Non-State, Environment and Culture, and Social.

Through these work opportunities, government has transferred a total of R9.3 billion as income support to EPWP participants in the 20/21 financial year alone.

The DPWI observes that more women continue to participate in the EPWP, with over 68% of the participants being women. This shows that the Programme is making a meaningful contribution to the improvement of the socio-economic status of women in terms of opportunities to earn and income.

EPWP Performance per Sector from April 2020 to March 2021

During this period, the EPWP Non-State Sector provided the highest number of work opportunities at a total of 300 494 followed by Infrastructure at 266 182 work opportunities. The

Social, and Environment and Culture sectors created 207 790 and 164 222 work opportunities respectively.

EPWP Performance per Province from April 2020 to March 2021

KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape continued to lead in the creation of EPWP opportunities – the two provinces created 219 947 and 190 706 respectively. The performance by other provinces is as follows:

| Provinces | Gross number of work opportunities created (01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021) |
|---------------|---|
| Free State | 61 966 |
| Gauteng | 91 895 |
| Limpopo | 111 283 |
| Mpumalanga | 70 694 |
| North West | 64 926 |
| Northern Cape | 41 817 |
| Western Cape | 85 454 |

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure thanks all EPWP implementing bodies for contributing into the success of the Programme and to continue deliver quality services to various communities in South Africa. The DPWI also calls all implementing public bodies to scale up implementation of the EPWP so as to create more work opportunities that will make a contribution to poverty alleviation and reduction of unemployment.



Government should reimagine the EPWP beyond Covid-19 health pandemic, says the EPWP National Programme Manager

Article by Michael Mokoena

Picture by Brian Dlamini



As the Covid-19 global health pandemic continues to decimate jobs, and technology replacing part of – if not most – work that is performed by humans, South Africa must look for new opportunities that may benefit programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in this rapidly changing world. The above sentiments were made by the EPWP National Programme Manager in the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, Mr. Lungisani Dladla during a recent sit-down interview with the team of **EPWP News**.

In a wide ranging interview, Mr. Dladla said “we must open a conversation about the future and direction of the EPWP during and post Covid-19 health pandemic”

“When you look at the history of the EPWP, one can appreciate that the Programme can be traced back to the National Public Works Programme (NPWP) and Community Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) where most of the work opportunities it (Programme) created were driven mainly by infrastructure during the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Since the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) of 2003, the EPWP evolved and expanded by looking at creating opportunities in new sectors including Social, Environment and Culture as well as Economic Sector which was later replaced by the Non-State Sector,”

“Today as the Covid-19 and the emergence of new technology continue to slaughter the job market and displaces many workers globally, we must reimagine the EPWP beyond its current form. We must use the Programme’s history to look for new opportunities for the EPWP post Covid-19,” Mr. Dladla explained.

He pointed out that opportunities that existed for the EPWP included playing a role in the rollout of information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure in the country.

“We have seen a massive campaign to roll-out ICT infrastructure in the country...EPWP must look at opportunities for participants in the implementation and maintenance of ICT infrastructure in the country, 4th Industrial Revolution is a reality and it is with us, how do we make sure that the programme is not left behind? Green jobs...

we can produce a lot of work opportunities in that space,” he added.

As a former participant in the EPWP himself, Mr. Dladla indicated that these days a lot of young people in the Programme are highly educated with some of them having ICT skills, science and many others.

“We therefore need to provide these young people with opportunities that they can use as we move into the digital economy.”

Mr. Dladla first joined the EPWP in the early 2000s as a participant in the Environment and Culture Sector’s Land-Care Programme in KwaZulu-Natal, implemented by the Provincial Department of Agriculture. He worked for 3 years in the Programme with local schools and agricultural organisations in his community of Pietermaritzburg, doing community awareness on environmental matters.

“Like many EPWP participants today, I too did not join the Programme for money. I participated in the Programme because I was keen to learn and participate in the development of my community. The EPWP introduced me to many opportunities that were available in the field of environmental care,” he explained.

He indicated that transitioning from being a participant to being an official within the EPWP was an exciting experience, “When I went back to University in 2004 to complete my studies, not in my wildest dreams I thought I will be directly involved in the programme in the way I am”.

“My stint in the EPWP as a participant has shaped my understanding of the importance of the Programme in the lives of our people. Like many officials in the EPWP, I understand that the EPWP contributes to the betterment of the lives of our people,”

“I must also acknowledge that since joining the Programme as an official, I have come to understand how tirelessly every official works to ensure the success of the Programme,” he stated.

Mr. Dladla, who is currently involved in a research project with the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the National Research Foundation (NRF) through the SARChI Chair Sustainable Local (Rural) Livelihoods looking at the “Public Employment Programmes and their Contributions to Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Communities” with the focus on the Zibambele and Welisizwe Rural Bridges Programme. He has written and published a number of academic articles and presented conference papers on various aspects of the EPWP and small business development, including his recent articles on PEP and Green Jobs for Youth; the Economics of Covid-19. He also commended officials in the EPWP for contributing towards research and development in the Programme.

Concluding the interview, Mr. Dladla encouraged EPWP participants to use opportunities given to them by the Programme to uplift themselves and their communities out of poverty and underdevelopment.

Youth in Waste Management Project help to maintain clean towns

Article by: Lesego Moretlwe

Pictures by N.V. Mamathaba (Mmabatho Regional Office)



In a collaborative effort to contribute to service delivery needs and alleviate poverty within the communities, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in the North West province through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) implemented the Youth in Waste Management Project across the eight (08) municipalities in the province.

In the 2020/2021 financial year, (COGTA) identified municipalities to implement EPWP projects utilising the allocated budget from the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI). Eight (08) municipalities were identified to implement waste management strategies through the deployment of young people to assist with waste removal and operation as well as maintenance of waste sites. These municipalities were Ramotshere Moiloa, Mamusa, Kgetleng Rivier, Moses Kotane, Moretele, Maquassi Hills and Kagisano Molopo local municipalities.

The project started in June 2020 and ended in March 2021. During its implementation, the project created 121 work opportunities for young people with 77 work opportunities accounted for women and 02 work opportunities for people with disabilities. These EPWP participants received a daily wage of R110.00 per day per person.

Mr Peni Galeboe who was the manager of the project in Ipelegeng township within Mamusa Local Municipality area said that he was happy with the impact that the project had in the community.

"The township had 31 illegal dumping sites and through the Youth in Waste Management Project, 15 participants who were from needy and child headed households in the area managed to eliminate three illegal dumping sites which have been turned into a Kiddies Park and two car wash facilities/services," he said. Mr Galeboe further explained that during the implementation of the project, the participants were offered an induction and Occupational Health and Safety training.

All the participants were recruited according to the EPWP recruitment and selection policy and criteria. For the duration of the project implementation all public bodies implementing this project in their respective areas adhered to the EPWP Ministerial Determination which clearly outlines the conditions of service / employment for the EPWP participants.

One of the participants was Mr Kagiso Kokolosi (23 years old) who is the first born of three children and resides in Ipelegeng Township where they were raised by their grandmother. Mr Kokolosi pursued tertiary education but could not complete his studies due to financial constraints. He said he was happy to have participated in the project which had a positive impact to the community and gave him an experience about teamwork and the importance of living in a clean environment. He further said "with the monthly income wage that I received, I managed to provide for my family and even bought some of the building material as my intention is to build a house for my family" he concluded.

The project objectives were as follows:

- Foster a collaborative effort amongst organisations involved in waste management so that they jointly achieve common goals through joint planning;
- Facilitate the provision of infrastructure that could effectively contribute to economic development and social upliftment of communities;
- Build sustainable relationships amongst stakeholders based on common interest, drive for sustainable development, commitment to develop disadvantaged communities, and support for private sector development;
- To involve the youth to participate effectively in the provision of basic services to their communities;
- To provide opportunities for job creation and upliftment of communities.

The two main aspects of this project was to raise awareness about waste management and encouraging the youth to take active part in waste management ventures as well as providing skills training and integrated development support to facilitate a process through which the youth were capacitated to participate in waste management, operation and maintenance.

The implementation of this programme in the North West Province has assisted municipalities in addressing waste management challenges as communities have voiced their desires for basic services through various public platforms. This has also been a vehicle in which municipalities are able to contribute towards job creation as well as providing the much needed services in the respective municipalities.



Kimberley Regional Office of DPWI collaborates with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment in Entrepreneurship Development in the Northern Cape Province

Article by Michael Mokoena
Pictures by Nomazulu Sibanda



The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) in collaboration with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DPPE) is providing entrepreneurship development support to some of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) youth participants in the Northern Cape Province as part of the exit strategy.

The programme kick started with a business skills training where the DPWI, through its EPWP Enterprise Development Unit in the Northern Cape, provided Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) entrepreneurship training to 31 young EPWP participants who have been employed under a programme called Thuma Mina Green Deeds Project in the province's John Taolo Gaetsewe District.

According to the Deputy Director for EPWP Enterprise Development in the province, Ms Nomazulu Sibanda, the Thuma Mina Green Deeds Project is a national project implemented by the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment. This project recruit and employ youth in the communities who are involved in activities such as cleaning, environmental awareness campaigns and environmental education," Ms Sibanda said.

She elaborated that this project started in June 2019 and employed - 49 youth participants in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District of which 44 are women from three local municipalities (provide names of these local municipalities) in the district.

"On initial engagement a total of 31 of the participants in this project indicated that they were interested in entrepreneurship and that is when SIYB training was introduced to them. On assessment of the participants to determine an SIYB training package relevant to them it was discovered that they do not have business ideas therefore they were taken through the Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI) training," Ms Sibanda said.

Ms Sibanda has also indicated that at the end of the training a number of business ideas were identified such as vegetable and citrus farming in Maruping village, waste recycling in Magojaneng village and vegetable farming in the Khathu area.

"Some of the participants who managed to identify business ideas will get further entrepreneurship support such as compliance registration and linkages to other SMME development Departments and Agencies in the province. There is also going to be a follow up training with another SIYB package known as Start Your Business (SYB) in the 2nd quarter of the 2021/2022 financial year. The aim of this follow up training is to take the participants through the business planning process."

Ms Sibanda further explained that the programme is being expanded to other districts such as Frances Baard and Pixley Ka Seme where young people involved in similar activities are also going to be assessed to determine their entrepreneurship support needs.

"This initiative hopes to bring partners such as the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT) as well as the municipalities in the respective areas to help support the youth in establishing their businesses," Ms Sibanda said.

One of the participants, Ms Refilwe Mmusiemang, expressed excitement about participating in the SIYB training.

"We learned a lot about starting and managing a business. We also learned that it does not require a lot of money to start a business. We were given information about government departments that can assist us to start our businesses as well as agencies that can assist with further entrepreneurship training," Ms Mmusiemang said.



DPWI to hosts virtual graduation ceremony for officials who completed the EPWP Virtual Learning Programme

Article by Michael Mokoena

Pictures by EPWP Partnership Support



The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) hosted a virtual certification ceremony for officials who have successfully completed the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Learning Programme. The five-day EPWP Learning Programme was recently hosted virtually by the EPWP Partnership Support unit.

According to Deputy Director: Partnership Support, Ms Nombuso Ngcobo, the Covid-19 health pandemic has made the unit to look at virtual platform to provide and deliver the learning programme to officials who are responsible for implementing the EPWP.

“The aim of the Learning Programme is to enhance and promote a common understanding of the EPWP to implementers, policy makers, politicians and new employees to the Programme. The training was attended by officials from Provincial Departments and Municipalities of KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Northern Cape,” Ms Ngcobo explained.

She stated that the participants received extensive information regarding EPWP, its Sectors as well as the cross-cutting support functions.

“Participants are expected to go back to their organisations and advocate EPWP and do things differently, for example, improve reporting of work opportunities they have created,” Ms. Ngcobo said.

During the five day programme, various presentations (modules) were delivered including basic understanding of EPWP sectors, EPWP Training, Enterprise Development, and EPWP Monitoring and Evaluation.

Ms Ngcobo indicated that the Learning Programme had properly

structured group activities. “The aim was to ensure that all participants are interacting by breaking complex tasks into parts and steps, plan and manage time, refine understanding through discussions and explanations, give and receive feedback on performance and challenge assumptions, develop stronger communication skills, tackle more complex problems than they could on their own, delegate roles and responsibilities, share diverse perspectives and receive social support and encouragement to take risks,”

“This was a best tool to ensure that modules presented were understood,” Ms Ngcobo stated.

At the end of the Learning Programme, participants were evaluated and successful candidates were awarded certificates of completion of training during a virtual certification ceremony which was held in May 2021.

Ms Ngcobo added that her unit will continue to use the virtual platform to provide training to EPWP implementing bodies.

One of the officials who attended the Learning Programme is the EPWP Champion for Ilembe District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Notha Maphumulo, who expressed excitement about having been part of the training.

“The EPWP Virtual Learning Programme has provided many of us with an in-depth understanding of the EPWP. For instance, we have learned about the importance of providing training to the participants so that when they exit the EPWP they have skills they can use to apply for formal employment or even set up their own small businesses”

“We have also learned about government finance institutions that can help out participants with funding should they (EPWP participants) want to pursue entrepreneurship after exiting the EPWP,” Mr Maphumulo explained.



EPWP contributes to the implementation of Covid-19 regulations in Eastern Cape

Article by: Michael Mokoena

In a move to ensure that residents remain safe during the ongoing Covid-19 health pandemic, the Mnqushwa Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape has appointed 54 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 regulations in the area. The municipality's EPWP Coordinator Ms Ayabulela Manjezi said that the Programme (EPWP) is amongst several interventions undertaken by the municipality to tackle Covid-19 in the area.

Ms Manjezi explained that the participants are deployed across the town of Peddie (administration home of the municipality) and at all villages in the municipality to ensure compliance with Covid-19 regulations.

"The actual work participants do include ensuring social distancing and sanitising community members at high risk areas such as schools, local post office, banking institutions and at funerals in the area " Ms Manjezi said.

She added that the participants were trained on health and safety at work by the Department of Health.

The participants were appointed in August 2020 on a 12 month contract and they earn a daily wage of R100.

Participants' testimonials

Ms Sinovuyo Ndwana said that being part of the Programme has given her skills to interact and communicate with people. "The Programme has also taught me a lot about Covid-19," she said.

For Mr Lukhanyo Ntongana, the Programme has given him an opportunity to earn an income and provide for his family.

DPWI in partnership with FSCA and NEF hosts EPWP Investor Seminar

Article by Michael Mokoena

Pictures by National Empowerment Fund



Tips for saving and Investing

Don't rush into signing

- Shop around for credible investment and saving opportunities
- Shop around before purchasing any non-perishables
- Get a financial expert for financial advice
- Understand additional fees linked to your purchase
- Never rush to sign contracts and agreements without checking all related conditions
- Create a relationship with the financial institution/s
- File documents of value (e.g contracts & wills)
- Review your investment plan as often as possible

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The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) has recommitted itself towards providing entrepreneurial development support to Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants. DPWI - through its EPWP Enterprise Development Unit - said it wants to see more EPWP participants and those who have exited the Programme venture into the business sector.

The above statement came out of the EPWP Investor Seminar that was recently hosted by DPWI in partnership with the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA) and the National Empowerment Fund (NEF).

Different stakeholders made presentations on how participants can be encouraged and assisted to venture into business.

A presentation by NEF's Treasure, Mohale shared light on financial assistance offered by the Fund to drive entrepreneurship in the country. She said NEF provided both financial and non-financial support to black owned businesses. Financial assistance comes in the form of a loan that must be paid back once the business is operating while non-financial support include training on management, legal, marketing and operational matters. She pointed out that funds that they provide to SMMEs are rural biased, the main aim is to develop underprivileged communities.

"It is therefore important for the business to be sustainable so that it can be able to pay back the loan we would have given them. I must also state that we do not fund Non-Profit Organisations as they are not likely to pay back the loan we would have given to them," Mohale pointed out.

A presentation by FSCA's Ephraim Kgosana provided information on how participants can invest and save money. Kgosana clarified that participants did not need to have a lot of money to start investing or saving.

"The key in investing or saving money is to know your goal... knowing that/what would assist you to make wise decisions as you invest or save money," he said.

He added that goal setting would assist participants to know whether to choose a short term or long term investment or money saving solution.

DPWI hosts NYS Graduations in Limpopo

Article and pictures by Maanea Maselesele



The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) hosted a National Youth Service (NYS) graduation ceremony on 26 May 2021 in Polokwane, Limpopo.

The graduating learners participated in the Department's work of refurbishing the Polokwane Magistrate Court. During the 12 month long training, the learners (participants) received both theoretical and practical work in the field of carpentry, plumbing, electrical and mechanical work as well as plastering and bricklaying.

During the graduation ceremony, the participants were awarded Competency Certificates in the Building & Civil Construction at NQF Level 3.

Participants were encouraged to use the skills gained to look for formal employment or even set up small businesses for themselves. Upon graduating, participants were also given toolboxes by the DPWI so that they can start small businesses.

Ms Phethani Muvhali, the EPWP Programme Manager in Limpopo, congratulated the participants for successful completion of the training and wished them well with their future endeavours.

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) representative who attended the ceremony encouraged participants to register on the Government's Jobseekers' Database.

Upon the completion of the NYS programme, one participant, Mr Mpho Ramoleta, was offered a six months employment contract as a plumber by a construction company that he was placed with. Mr Ramoleta's contract is expected to run until March 2022.

Meanwhile, ceremony was also utilised to recognise eight EPWP Participants from Limpopo who were selected to participate on a 3 years Artisan Development Programme. These participants are placed at various companies in Limpopo for practical training. The eight participants form part of the 212 artisans who were recruited in all the nine provinces and commenced training in the 2020/21 financial year.

These artisans are being trained in the following trades: automotive, motor mechanic, boiler maker, bricklaying, carpentry, chef, diesel mechanic, electrician, fitter, instrumentation, lift mechanic, mechanical fitter, millwright, fitter & tuner, plumber, refrigeration, rigger, welder and hairdresser.

The Artisan Development Programme is done in partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Agriculture Sector Education and Training Authority (Agriseta), several Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVETs) colleges and private companies.