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EPWP NEWSLETTER



AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2026



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From the Editor in Chief

Welcome to this edition of our EPWP newsletter.

This edition highlights the continued efforts of the EPWP to create work opportunities, strengthen communities and equip participants with skills for improved livelihoods. It features key developments, including the digitalisation of EPWP recruitment, Minister Macpherson's EPWP Listening Tour, graduation and certificate handover ceremonies, and community initiatives making a difference across the country.

We also showcase the impact of the Community Work Programme in Limpopo and computer training initiatives in Gauteng, demonstrating how EPWP interventions are supporting participants with valuable skills and opportunities.

We invite you to explore this edition and learn more about the people, programmes and partnerships contributing to the ongoing impact of EPWP.

Enjoy the issue!!!

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STOP
Violence Against Women

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EPWP RECRUITMENT GOES DIGITAL AS FIRST WORKING ON INFRASTRUCTURE VACANCIES GO LIVE ON SA YOUTH MOBI

Article by Kgomotso Mathuloe

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure has taken a significant step towards the digital transformation of recruitment within the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), following the advertisement of the first Working on Infrastructure vacancies on the zero-rated SA Youth Mobi platform.

Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Hon. Dean Macpherson, welcomed the advertisement of the vacancies, describing the development as a practical step towards strengthening transparency and fairness in EPWP recruitment. The move forms part of ongoing efforts to address concerns raised during the Department's nationwide EPWP listening tours regarding recruitment practices, including allegations of political patronage and gatekeeping.

Through the SA Youth Mobi platform, EPWP opportunities are made visible to young people through a digital recruitment process that provides clear, rules-based access to available vacancies. The platform is zero-rated, meaning that young people can access it without using mobile data or airtime.

Launched in May 2026, the Working on Infrastructure programme seeks to strengthen the developmental impact of EPWP by providing participants with practical infrastructure repair and maintenance skills, workplace experience and opportunities to progress towards recognised occupational roles. The programme includes opportunities such as assistant handy-person roles, with a focus on equipping participants with practical skills that can support their transition into longer-term employment.

This approach supports the Department's objective of transforming EPWP participation from a short-term work opportunity into a platform for skills development, workplace experience and pathways towards sustainable employment. The rollout of the programme continued with registration drive of KwaZulu-Natal cohort which took place in Ugu District on 18 August 2026.

The digital recruitment approach is intended to improve access to opportunities while reducing discretion and informal recruitment practices. It also supports the Department's broader commitment to ensuring that EPWP opportunities are communicated and accessed through transparent and structured processes. ■





MINISTER DEAN MACPHERSON ENGAGES EPWP PARTICIPANTS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN NELSON MANDELA BAY AS PART OF THE LISTENING TOUR

Article by Maanea Maselesele, pictures by Roslyn Mahlaole

The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Hon. Dean Macpherson engaged with EPWP participants and stakeholders in Nelson Mandela Bay on the 28 August 2026 as part of the ongoing EPWP Listening Tour.

The engagement provided an opportunity for participants and communities to raise concerns and share their experiences of the programme directly with the Department. The Minister emphasised the importance of listening to communities and using their experiences to strengthen the implementation of EPWP. He also clarified that EPWP is more than a short term work opportunity programme, but an intervention designed to provide income relief and skills development to unemployed South Africans.

Participants and stakeholders raised a range of issues affecting the implementation of EPWP, including:

- Unpaid stipends and payment challenges;
- Unfair recruitment processes;
- Concerns regarding political interference;

- The inclusion of women and persons with disabilities;
- Age eligibility requirements; and
- The need for stronger community involvement.

Addressing concerns around recruitment, EPWP Deputy Director-General, Ms Carmen-Joy Abrahams outlined the Department's approach to reviewing the programme's guidelines. DDG Abrahams explained that proposed changes would be taken back to communities and stakeholders for further engagement, ensuring that the revised guidelines are practical, inclusive and responsive to local realities.

The Minister was accompanied by EPWP DDG Carmen-Joy Abrahams, Member of Parliament Baxolile Babongile Nodada, Councillor Booysen and Councillor Xolani Notshe.

The Listening Tour forms part of the Department's ongoing commitment to engaging communities, addressing challenges and strengthening the EPWP so that it delivers meaningful opportunities for participants across South Africa. ■



CWP SKILLS PROGRAMME CERTIFICATION CEREMONY PROVIDES SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Article by Tinyiko Mdluli, pictures by Khanyisa Moagi

The Community Work Programme (CWP), under the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG), in collaboration with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) -Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), hosted a certificate ceremony for 72 participants who completed the skills development programme training. The ceremony was held at the Rustenburg Civic Centre in the North West on 10 September 2026.

The ceremony was attended by COGTA Deputy Minister, Dr Namane Dickson Masemola; MEC for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA) in North West, Mr G. Molapisi; Executive Mayor of Rustenburg Local Municipality, Councillor Sheila Mabale; Deputy Director-General for EPWP, Ms Carmen-Joy Abrahams; as well as Chief Directors and senior officials from the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality.

The event celebrated the achievements of 72 CWP participants who successfully completed a 50-day skills training programme in Shielded Metal Arc Welding and General Skills. The training was delivered at Orbit TVET College from 9 September to 15 November 2024.

The ceremony provided an opportunity to recognise the participants' commitment to acquiring skills that can contribute to improved employability and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Adding a personal and inspirational dimension to the event,

former CWP participant Tebogo Mmusi shared her journey and reflected on the role the programme played in transforming her life. Following her participation in the training and subsequent graduation, she secured permanent employment as a teacher at Tsunami Primary School.

Addressing the graduates, EPWP Deputy Director-General, Ms Carmen-Joy Abrahams highlighted the importance of public employment programmes in creating pathways towards sustainable livelihoods.

"As we continue to journey with CWP as EPWP, the aim of these public employment programmes is to improve your employability, provide skills and provide pathways to sustainable livelihoods."

Ms Abrahams also highlighted ongoing reforms within the EPWP, including the launch of the digital recruitment system and the Working Infrastructure Programme, which are aimed at improving



EPWP PARTICIPANTS BUILD BRICKS AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES IN MARBLE HALL, LIMPOPO

Article Kagiso Mootane, pictures by Roslyn Mahlaole



The National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) is making a meaningful contribution to sustainable livelihoods in Matseding Village, Marble Hall, Limpopo, where five Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants have established and successfully run Basadi Ba Thari Ya Kgokong Bricks Primary Cooperative Limited.

Established on 28 March 2018 by five women, the cooperative has grown into an enterprise that creates employment opportunities, contributes to poverty reduction and supports local economic development.

As part of the EPWP Enterprise Development initiative, the DPWI provided the participants with Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training. The training focused on developing a business plan, including a marketing plan and costing, as well as identifying opportunities and approaches for sourcing funding.

The Improve Your Business (IYB) programme is a management training programme designed for owners and managers of small enterprises who want to sustain their businesses, increase sales and reduce costs. The programme focuses on practical approaches to improving business performance and strengthening enterprise management.

The training has strengthened the cooperative members' capacity to manage their business effectively and identify opportunities for future growth. During an oversight visit to the project, Ms Moshidi Makhubela, Deputy Director: Enterprise Development at DPWI, commended the members for their hard work, dedication and commitment to growing their business.

Ms Makhubela said the project demonstrates how EPWP participants can utilise opportunities provided through the programme to develop themselves and establish sustainable livelihoods. She encouraged the members to continue working together, strengthening their business and creating further

economic opportunities within their community. Ms Annita Mogane, a Community Work Programme (CWP) Site Coordinator at Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality, supports and oversees the participants, providing encouragement as they work towards sustainable livelihoods through the CWP exit strategy.

The strategy assists participants in establishing income-generating initiatives that can provide longer-term livelihood opportunities beyond participation in the programme. Basadi Ba Thari Ya Kgokong Bricks Primary Cooperative Limited is an example of such an initiative.

The cooperative currently produces approximately 250 bricks per day. The brickmaking process involves mixing raw materials, including sand and cement, before the mixture is moulded into bricks and left to dry.

The cooperative produces different types of bricks, including block bricks, hollow bricks and maxi bricks. These products are used in the construction of houses and other structures within the community.

The establishment of the cooperative was supported by the Community Work Programme (CWP) under the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), which provided the members with brickmaking training, 10 bags of cement and a block brickmaking machine. This support enabled the group to establish a productive activity that generates income, strengthens their business and contributes to local economic development.

The success and sustainability of the cooperative have been supported by various stakeholders, including CWP, DPWI, Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality, Sekhukhune District Municipality, the National Movement of Rural Women, the Department of Social Development and the cooperative's loyal customers.

The collective support of these stakeholders has contributed to strengthening the cooperative's operations and creating opportunities for the participating women. Reflecting on the impact of the initiative, Ms Moshidi Philda, Secretary and one of the EPWP participants and co-founders of the cooperative, said the project had changed their lives for the better.

She explained that the business provides members with an income, valuable skills and an opportunity to support their families. She added that the initiative has empowered women to become more economically independent while making a positive contribution to the development of their community.

The Basadi Ba Thari Ya Kgokong Bricks Primary Cooperative Limited demonstrates the potential of EPWP enterprise development initiatives to support participants in moving towards sustainable livelihoods, entrepreneurship and local economic participation. ■

THE EPWP SOCIAL SECTOR IN FREE STATE CELEBRATES A MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT AS ONE OF ITS OWN JOINS THE TEACHER ASSISTANT PROGRAMME

Article and picture by Masego Maselwanyane



Mmalesoana Hadebe started her journey of job seeking by participating in the EPWP Social Sector as a Teacher Assistant in the Free State Department of Education. She was subsequently placed at Polokehong Primary School as an assistant to a Grade 3 teacher. Prior to joining the EPWP as a Teacher Assistant, Ms Hadebe had just completed matric and had enrolled for a Diploma in Early Childhood Development.

What started as temporary employment while on a journey of seeking permanent employment became a redefining moment for Mmalesoana Hadebe. Being in the classroom made her realize her love for children and passion for teaching.

The Assistant Teacher role plays a significant role in the basic education environment, where reaching out to children,



especially those who are struggling with reading and mathematics, is a need. In most cases, teachers are faced with overcrowded classes and therefore require further learning assistance.

The children struggling with reading and counting are identified and handed over to the Teacher Assistant, who is tasked with assisting these children in improving their reading and counting skills. This arrangement was also communicated with the parents, who give their consent to make the children available and support this initiative in the best interest of the children.

Ms Hadebe is a passionate Teacher Assistant who is making a remarkable contribution to the education of these children. "I was able to assist a child who could not read or count to reach the level of the other children, and this made me realize that I have what it takes to become a teacher," said Ms Hadebe.

During her contract as a Teacher Assistant, she managed to save some money from her stipend to register for a Bachelor of Education (B Ed) degree at the University of South Africa. At the end of her contract, Ms Hadebe requested to stay at the school as a volunteer.

In 2021/2022, she was re-appointed as a Teacher Assistant for the second time for twelve months, and this gave her a real opportunity to complete her studies.

Through the stipend she received, she was able to assist her grandmother by sending her a portion monthly. She was also able to lay a tombstone for her late mother and pay for the education of her child. She graduated with her B Ed degree in 2022 and was appointed as a full-time qualified teacher in 2023 at Polokehong Primary School. ■





COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMME MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN MOGALAKWENA COMMUNITIES

Article and pictures by Tinyiko Mdluli

For 100 participants in the Mogalakwena Local Municipality, the Community Work Programme (CWP) is more than an opportunity to earn an income it is a platform to contribute to the development and wellbeing of their communities.

The CWP forms part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Non-State Sector, creating work opportunities for participants who are actively involved in initiatives that address the needs of local communities.

Participants are engaged in a variety of community-based activities, including supporting Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres, food gardening, waste management and recycling, and cleaning public facilities.

Through their daily work, participants are making a visible contribution to cleaner, healthier and more supportive communities. Their involvement in ECD centres, in particular, provides valuable support to young children and teenage mothers, helping to create an environment that promotes learning and development.

Deputy Director for the EPWP Non-State Sector, Ms Mosima Ndlanzi, said the projects are crucial in alleviating poverty, creating work opportunities and equipping communities with skills that can contribute to improved livelihoods.

“The programme has also contributed to addressing unemployment in the area by providing participants with work opportunities, experience and a sense of purpose. The benefits extend beyond individual participants, with the programme contributing to improved learner performance and supporting an improved standard of living within the community. Said Ms Ndlanzi.

Ms Ndlanzi further said that the work being carried out by CWP participants in Mogalakwena demonstrates the value of public employment programmes in responding to community needs while creating opportunities for people to participate meaningfully in the development of their communities.

Through continued collaboration with communities and local stakeholders, the CWP remains an important mechanism for supporting livelihoods, strengthening community initiatives and contributing to inclusive local development. ■





EPWP TECHNICAL SUPPORT DRIVES LABOUR-INTENSIVE CONSTRUCTION IN MUSINA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Article and pictures by Maanea Maselesele

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) continues to promote labour-intensive construction methods in infrastructure projects through technical support, creating work opportunities while contributing to skills development and community participation.

Through its technical support, the EPWP is supporting the installation of electrical infrastructure at the Rhino Ridge Development under the Musina Local Municipality. The project has recruited 20 EPWP participants for a period of 12 months, ending on 30 November 2026.

The participants are involved in a range of activities, including surveying and pegging, excavation and the installation of street lights. Their responsibilities also include laying cables, installing low-voltage kiosks, making electrical connections and compacting excavated areas.

The project further involves mounting transformers, installing medium-voltage poles and stringing overhead conductors.

“Our technical support approach focuses on incorporating the Labour-Intensive Construction (LIC) clauses in the tender document and identifying activities in the Bills of Materials (BOMs) that can be carried out using labour-intensive methods,” said Mr Lesley Kgoale, EPWP Technical Support Manager based at the Limpopo Regional Office. “We guide the implementing public bodies on the correct methods and ensure that the work is carried out safely and to the required standards,” added Kgoale.

Labour-intensive construction methods use labour as a major resource in infrastructure development, supported by appropriate tools, equipment and technical expertise. The approach seeks to maximise employment opportunities while ensuring the delivery of quality infrastructure. ■



MUSINA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY RECRUITS 168 EPWP PARTICIPANTS TO SUPPORT WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

Article and pictures by Maanea Maselesele

Musina Local Municipality has recruited 168 EPWP participants under a waste management programme aimed at supporting cleanliness and improving the overall appearance of the town.

The participants were recruited across 12 wards through ward councillors and traditional councils, ensuring that local communities benefit directly from the employment opportunities created through the programme.

The multi-year project is funded through the municipality's own funding and an Integrated Grant from the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI). The project commenced on 1 July 2026 and will run until 30 July 2027.

The EPWP participants support the municipality with a range of waste management and cleaning activities, including waste collection, street sweeping, litter picking and cleaning skip bins. Through their daily activities, participants contribute to cleaner public spaces and municipal facilities, helping to maintain a welcoming environment for residents and visitors.

Their work also includes the maintenance of public buildings such as the Town Hall and other municipal facilities.

According to EPWP Coordinator Timothy Tshikhudo, the participants are making an important contribution to the municipality's cleaning and waste management efforts. "They provide valuable support across the municipality, assisting with a range of tasks and helping to ensure that more areas are reached and maintained," said Tshikhudo.

The initiative demonstrates collaboration between national and local government through the EPWP to support municipalities in addressing service delivery needs while creating work opportunities for local communities.

The project is reported under the EPWP Environment and Culture Sector, which supports initiatives that contribute to environmental sustainability while creating work opportunities for communities. ■



EMPOWERING PARTICIPANTS THROUGH FINANCIAL LITERACY IN WESTERN CAPE

Article and pictures by Tinyiko Mdluli



A total of 113 participants took part in the training. These included 21 participants from Bellville Magistrate's Court, 15 from Blue Downs Magistrate's Court, 21 from the Labour Court, three from Cape Town Magistrate's Court, four from Cape Town High Court, 15 from Cape Town Regional Court, 14 from the Dullah Omar Master of the High Court, four from Paarl Magistrate's Court and 18 from Worcester Magistrate's Court.

Participants shared positive experiences about the knowledge gained during the workshop. "This workshop has changed the way I think about money. I now understand the importance of budgeting and saving before spending. I feel empowered to make better financial decisions for myself and my family," said one participant.

Another participant highlighted the value of the information provided on unclaimed benefits. "The information about unclaimed benefits was a real eye-opener. I learned something that can help me, my family and even members of my community. Knowledge like this is invaluable," the participant said.

As the workshop concluded, participants left with new knowledge, increased confidence and a stronger understanding of financial responsibility. The training provided them with practical tools to make informed financial decisions and work towards more secure financial futures for themselves and their families. ■

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI), through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), partnered with the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA) to host a basic financial literacy workshop for EPWP participants in the Western Cape.

The training was held over two weeks, from 11 to 21 August 2026, and equipped participants with practical financial knowledge focusing on budgeting, saving, accessing unclaimed benefits, fraud awareness and insurance products.

The workshop targeted EPWP participants providing cleaning services at various courts in the Cape Metro and Cape Winelands District Municipalities.



LIVING HERITAGE, PASSING DOWN GENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

EPWP PARTICIPANTS GAIN CONFIDENCE THROUGH BASIC COMPUTER TRAINING PROGRAMME IN GAUTENG PROVINCE

Article and pictures by Kagiso Mootane



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Social Sector, in partnership with the Gauteng Department of Health, is empowering 50 EPWP participants from all five health Districts across Gauteng through an accredited Basic Computer Training Programme.

To ensure equitable access to training and skills development, each District nominated 10 participants to participate in the programme. The training is being delivered in five groups between 8 July and 5 August 2026, with each group attending a dedicated three-day training session at venues in Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, Tshwane, Sedibeng and West Rand.

The three-day training programme equips participants with both theoretical knowledge and practical computer skills that are essential in today's workplace. Throughout the training, participants learned how to operate computers, create and manage documents, use Microsoft Office applications and perform basic administrative tasks.

The skills acquired through the programme are intended to improve participants' confidence, strengthen their digital literacy and prepare them for employment opportunities beyond the EPWP. The training also contributes to improved administrative efficiency and service delivery within the public health sector. Ms Sanny Maluleka, Deputy Director: EPWP Social Sector, welcomed participants at Sebokeng Hospital on 29 July 2026 during a joint monitoring visit with the Training Support Unit. She encouraged participants to embrace the training opportunity with dedication and commitment.

Ms Maluleka emphasised that computer literacy has become an essential skill in today's labour market and encouraged participants to continue investing in their personal and professional development. She further advised participants to use their stipends wisely by pursuing additional skills, including obtaining a driver's license, to enhance their employability and employment opportunities.

Ms Mpho Sibiya, EPWP Social Sector Coordinator for Gauteng Province, highlighted the valuable role participants play as facility assistants within the public health system. She noted that, through

carrying out their duties, participants support health system personnel and contribute to more efficient and timely service delivery.

She further explained that the Basic Computer Training Programme is one of several training initiatives aimed at helping EPWP participants perform their duties more effectively while acquiring skills that can prepare them for the broader work environment.

Mr Thinandavha Raliavhegwa, Assistant Director: EPWP Training Coordination at the Gauteng Department of Health, also addressed participants during the training and encouraged them to make full use of the opportunity.

He highlighted the importance of digital skills in today's labour market and urged participants to apply the knowledge gained through the programme to improve their future employment prospects. He also emphasised the department's commitment to utilising the 5% Integrated Grant (IG) training allocation to empower EPWP participants through skills development programmes that create pathways towards sustainable employment and economic opportunities.

The training was facilitated by Mr Ramatlou, who adopted a practical and participatory approach to teaching basic computer skills. Participants were guided through hands-on activities, including creating and formatting documents, using templates, preparing business letters, creating tables, typing documents and saving files.

The practical approach enabled participants to gain greater confidence in using computers and strengthened their ability to apply these skills in their daily duties.

Reflecting on the programme, EPWP participant Mr Lebohang Mofokoeng shared his positive experience and indicated that he had enjoyed the training and acquired several new computer skills. He explained that he can now type documents, save files and operate a computer with greater confidence. He said the skills gained through the programme would assist him in performing his duties more effectively.

Another participant, Ms Malehlohonolo Mbata, expressed excitement about the practical activities undertaken during the training. She highlighted the mail merge exercise, during which she and her fellow participants successfully created 100 letters in less than five minutes. Ms Mbata expressed confidence that the computer skills acquired through the programme would enhance her capabilities and assist her in securing better employment opportunities in the future.

The Basic Computer Training Programme demonstrates the continued commitment of the EPWP Social Sector and the Gauteng Department of Health to investing in skills development and creating opportunities for EPWP participants. By equipping participants with relevant digital and workplace skills, the programme contributes to building confidence, improving workplace efficiency and strengthening pathways towards. ■





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