



public works

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# EPWP improves on service delivery

By Lesego Moretlwe



Govan Mbeki Local Municipality, in Mpumalanga, was the second municipality to launch the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the province after the Nkangala District Municipality. The launch was held at the Johannes Stegmann Theatre in Secunda on 4 December 2012.

Among the attendees were more than 300 EPWP beneficiaries, the executive mayor of Govan Mbeki Local Municipality, councillor LL Masina, the municipal manager, M Mahlangu, as well as officials from the Department of Public Works and the Department of Environmental Affairs. In her keynote speech, the executive mayor said the municipality is well prepared to improve service delivery through the EPWP, which employs local communities and brings hope to the youth, reduces poverty and unemployment and improves the cleanliness in the area. She said the municipality is striving towards being one of the cleanest towns, a modern city and centre of excellence.

In his address, Isaac Mothapo, representative of the National Department of

Public Works, highlighted the third EPWP summit resolutions, while focusing on how important it is that the municipality implements the EPWP.

### Creating employment

Programme coordinator Dennis Masuku said he was striving to achieve the best results in implementing the EPWP and reducing unemployment in the area. Masuku encouraged beneficiaries to use the training and experience from the EPWP to their advantage to prepare themselves for further employment at other institutions. He said since the implementation of the EPWP in the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality, some 315 beneficiaries were recruited into the programme and are currently performing the following duties:

- cleaning of community halls, libraries, stadiums, parks and cemeteries
- litter picking and waste removal
- marking of roads and repair of road signs
- cleaning of roads and storm water channels
- data capturers (licensing, call centre, cemetery register)

- electrical maintenance assistance team
- water and sewer unblocking team
- land-use survey.

### Making a difference

One of the beneficiaries, Mapaseka Mahlomakhulu, said the EPWP came to her rescue when she was unemployed and struggling to make ends meet. "EPWP has made my life easier. I can now provide for my children and go to the ATM to withdraw money like everybody else. Thank you EPWP and Govan Mbeki Local Municipality!" Before joining the EPWP, environmental cleanliness was not her priority, but now she is also teaching fellow community members about the importance of a clean environment.



# Third EPWP Summit agrees on the way forward

By Eric Mkhunjulwa

The third Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Summit took place between 26 and 28 November 2012 under the theme “EPWP Best Practices: 2012 and beyond”. It was attended by EPWP champions, office bearers and MECs, and was aimed at allowing municipalities to share their best practices with one another on implementing the EPWP in terms of the 2011 summit resolutions.

## Skills and experience

In his opening address, the National Department of Public Works (NDPW) Deputy Minister Jeremy Cronin, remarked that EPWP was meant to equip South Africans with work experience since its inception. He urged delegates to pay particular attention to implement resolutions of the summit and find ways to redress unemployment in the country.

He also urged delegates to use the summit to find ways to work closer with their communities in order to change their lives for the better.

## Implementing EPWP

Representatives from the Chris Hani District Municipality in the Eastern Cape, Richmond Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the City of Cape Town shared their experience of implementing the EPWP programme in their communities.

On the second day, delegates met with their respective commissions to seek the best resolutions to implement the EPWP. On the last day, all five commissions presented resolutions. This made a significant contribution to EPWP resolutions and the ways forward for implementing the programme.

## Resolutions adopted

The following resolutions were then presented to the summit:

- Protocols must be monitored and sent to councils every quarter.

- All policies must be endorsed by 30 June 2012, and NDPW will provide technical support.
- Municipalities must have dedicated officials for EPWP at appropriate level of seniority.
- District forums must be established by 31 March 2013.
- Proper record management will be ensured to comply with audit requirements of the Auditor General’s office.
- Municipalities must prioritise EPWP in their IDPs.
- Municipalities must design EPWP projects to optimise labour-intensive methods.
- NDPW will provide technical support on the design at projects.
- NDPW will streamline training to ensure quality training.
- NDPW will continue to provide technical support to municipalities across all sectors to promote implementation of the EPWP.
- NDPW will strengthen coordination between municipalities, NPOs and implement agents.

## Correct reporting

NDPW Minister Thulas Nxesi closed the summit by advising delegates to pay more attention at the EPWP non-state sector to accelerate growth of the programme. He highlighted the achievements and noted that since the revision of the incentive grants, 139 municipalities received additional funding to implement EPWP, the majority of them being smaller municipalities.

As it has been the challenge in all the four sectors of EPWP, Minister Nxesi emphasised the importance of correct reporting and that such reporting affects the figures which are used for future planning.

In closing, the minister remarked that he had the sense of continual progress of the programme and that the EPWP implementers are indeed building solid foundation towards future growth concerning EPWP.

# First ever EPWP Provincial Summit in Free State

By Eric Mkhunjulwa



The delegates held commissions which informed them as to how they are going to implement the EPWP in their communities in a manner which will better their lives.

## **The Free State Provincial EPWP Summit adopted the following Resolutions:**

In the begin, the Free State hosted their first ever Expanded Public Works Programme provincial summit under the leadership of Ms Sisi Mabe, the MEC of Public Works in the province. On 27 and 28 September 2012, the Free State Department of Public Works hosted a two-day summit wherein service delivery was amidst the discussions.

Various stakeholders, including district and local municipalities, public entities and other national and provincial government structures that implements EPWP shared ideas and experiences on the successes and challenges the programme faced.

Opening the summit, MEC Mabe said that the government in the Free State was still on track with several initiatives to eradicate poverty through skills development programmes and labour intensive work opportunities, in a quest to halving unemployment in South Africa by 2014.

MEC Mabe continued to say that the EPWP implementation constituted one of the key programmes through which the government responds to the challenges of the second economy such as poverty, lack of work experience and skills. "We advanced the proposition that our government inherited a country of two economies whereby the first is Developed and part of the globe and the second characterised by poverty, underdevelopment and Marginalisation," MEC Mabe said.

The MEC stressed the importance and the need for all spheres of government to work together in an integrated and structured manner so that the government must succeed in its quest to use EPWP as a vehicle to alleviate poverty through the creation of labour intensive work opportunities.

- (1) EPWP Policy will be developed and endorsed by Council by February 2013
- (2) The EPWP and IDPs will be aligned to ensure that EPWP is mainstreamed in each municipality
- (3) Each municipality will strengthen its EPWP institutional arrangements, as per the signed protocols
- (4) EPWP District Steering Committees will be strengthened to be fully operational and effective
- (5) Improve monitoring and evaluation of EPWP
- (6) Sector specific resolutions will be implemented
- (7) The National and Provincial Departments of Public Works will provide intensified, focused Technical Support across all EPWP sectors to optimize the implementation of EPWP
- (8) Implementing public bodies undertakes to ensure that workers employed on EPWP receive the required training
- (9) Promote the development of cooperatives under the EPWP
- (10) Ensure compliance of the Ministerial Determination and Code of Good Practice on EPWP

# EPWP reaches out to the youth of Alexandra

By Siyabonga Mhlanga

into the infrastructure sector, while addressing the shortage of artisan skills in the construction industry.

The Alexandra youth came out, eager to learn more to make informed decisions about their future. The EPWP suggested examples of temporary and permanent job opportunities for the unemployed through programmes such as the EPWP Contractor Learnership Programme (Vuk'uphile), Internships Programme, Artisan Training through the National Youth Service and the Young Professionals Programme.

In his key note address, deputy minister of performance, monitoring and evaluation, Obed Bapela said, "It is important to take education seriously; that is why we are here to empower the youth of Alex through education." He encouraged the youth to continue

their studies and to consider becoming young entrepreneurs.

NYDA CEO Steven Ngubeni urged the youth to be committed and dedicated to their work or studies to change their future for the better. "It begins now to be the boss of tomorrow," Ngubeni noted.

**E**xpanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) recently joined other government departments in the Alexandra Youth Expo at Alexandra Stadium, Johannesburg. The exhibition was organised by the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and was aimed at educating the community about the role the EPWP plays in alleviating poverty, providing income, work experience and skills development by providing job opportunities.

One of the EPWP programmes, the National Youth Service (NYS), has been at the forefront of transferring skilled artisans



# EPWP employees celebrate Heritage Day

By Siyabonga Mhlanga

The Public Works Department's employees under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) joined the rest of the country in celebrating Heritage Month. The month recognises different aspects of South African culture and encourages everyone to celebrate their cultural heritage, diversity of beliefs and traditions.

EPWP staff dressed up in traditional clothing to make the younger generation aware of their identity. One of the administrative officers in the EPWP, Konesoang Peane, who was wearing Sesotho dress, said Heritage Day reminds people of their culture. "Our dress symbolise our individual identities," Peane said.

As part of the celebration, employees chose a colleague with the best traditional dress. Deputy director: EPWP Provincial Roads Sheila Kubayi came up tops. She wore her proudly Tsonga traditional dress. "We are celebrating our heritage to cherish the culture of unity and diversity, and understand and appreciate our culture," Kubayi explained. "Heritage Day means that I know my heritage and love my people and my country," she said.

Let us celebrate our heritage in the context of the diversity of cultures, beliefs and traditions that make up the proudly South African nation.



# ‘Collaborative Partnerships Reap Environmental Benefits for Communities’ – Duzi-Umngeni Conservation Trust

By Fuziwe Kubheka



One of the beneficiaries of the Expanded Public Works Programme’s (EPWP) Non-State Sector programme (NSS), Mbali Dlamini, says she is now more environmentally responsible, thanks to the NSS and the Duzi-Umngeni Conservation Trust (DUCT).

The NSS programme is a component of the EPWP that creates an opportunity for non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, faith-based organisations and communities to help with projects in their areas that can create employment. The Department of Public Works is the custodian of the programme.

The DUCT is based in Pietermaritzburg and dedicated to the environmental health of Umsunduzi (affectionately known as Duzi) and Umngeni Rivers in KwaZulu-Natal. The trust was set up after it was discovered that the water quality coming from the Umsunduzi and Umngeni Rivers was poor. Some 68 beneficiaries have been allocated to the DUCT project working in the Baynespruit River which runs into Umsunduzi River and

Dorpspruit. The project has employed 27% women and 72% youths who help to remove invasive plants from the Duzi River and clear public areas to prevent pollution from entering the Umngeni water catchment area.

Mbali Dlamini, one of the project beneficiaries, says before she came to DUCT, she too would litter into the rivers and on the streets but is now playing her part in building an environmentally responsible community. “Through the NSS and the National Lotteries Board, I was given a wage, and training in the work we are doing. I feel now it is my responsibility to teach others about the importance of a clean environment,” Dlamini said.

DUCT general manager Doug Burden explained that the partnership of the EPWP’s NSS, the National Lotteries Board, the community, uMsunduzi, uMngeni and uMgungundlovu municipalities has helped beneficiaries to receive income while cleaning their environment. He says communities were the inspiration leading to the DUCT model by working together to achieve safe, healthy and clean communal areas. “A partnership with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture’s Invasive Alien Clearing has also resulted in a significant reduction in invasive plants in Pietermaritzburg,” Burden noted.

He explained that thanks to the wage subsidy from the non-state sector and funds from the National Lotteries Board, they developed a plan in which contractors would be trained so that municipalities could employ them to clear sites and become contractors.

Joshua Xaba is a site supervisor currently being trained to become a contractor. The project is designed so that trained supervisors such as Xaba can become contractors and take over the sponsored tools and vans from the National Lotteries Board while starting their own businesses and hiring NSS beneficiaries. Pam Reid from the community identified the Baynespruit River to be cleared of invasive plants. Through her help, the DUCT sent a team to clean the area and discovered old sewage man holes. The Umngeni municipality is responsible for these man holes and has agreed to maintain the man holes. They also agreed to re-establish a walking trail which was covered in rubble. Meanwhile, a developer of the nearby townhouse complex has agreed to maintain walking trail as leisure spot for the area.



# PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT (2011/12)

## ‘A People-Centred Development Approach’

By Fuziwe Kubheka



Members of the Stedham community have been working on a piece of land in Zululand, in KwaZulu-Natal, for two years to prepare it for farming and the anticipation to begin with the planting phase is increasing every day. The 150 members of the Stedham community are beneficiaries of the Expanded Public Works Programme’s Non-State Sector (NSS).

The beneficiaries are employed under the Partners in Development Project, established to empower the people of Stedham to recultivate their land so that they can have their own maize fields and sustain themselves by selling maize. These beneficiaries received wages through a wage subsidy from the EPWPNSS while preparing the land for farming.



Nonhlanhla Mdlalose, NPO manager, says the project lies in a mountainous area where rocks and alien invasive plants cloud the land if it is not continuously cultivated and maintained. “The approach is to remove alien plants, cultivate the land, fence the fields and engage the Department of Agriculture to support the local community in the inception phase of the gardening project,” Mdlalose explained. As part of the intervention measure, the Independent Development Trust advised the Partners in Development project to collaborate with the Department of Rural Development and the Department of Agriculture to get help with fencing and mentoring the development of vegetable gardens for the community. The Partners in Development aims to have the community plant the land and make a living by selling their crops by the end of 2013.



Commenting on the project, Buyisile Zulu, one of the beneficiaries of the project said, “I’m happy that I’m working on a project that will benefit us all. We are removing alien plants and roots in preparing the land for farming. We have been working on this land for the past two years and are looking forward to fencing the area in preparation of the planting season.”

# Profiles of beneficiaries

By Lesego Morethwe



As part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) exit strategy, the EPWP helped beneficiaries to gain experiential training in the private sector by means of the National Youth Service (NYS).

The NYS is an initiative within the EPWP aimed at:

- creating work and training opportunities for the unemployed youth while addressing the shortage of artisan skills in the construction industry
- ensuring participation of the youth in community service delivery and encouraging patriotism among young South Africans
- ensuring that the youth develop skills, understanding and aspirations for working within the construction environment.

## Background

In 2008, four adventurous young women from Pietermaritzburg in the uMgungundlovu District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) were recruited to the EPWP. They were placed in training doing archives building and a renovation project under the NYS and were paid a stipend of R660 per month. They were then placed to work as experiential learners on site for six months and were paid R1 100 as per the EPWP prescripts.

Negotiations between the KZN Coastal FET College and the National Department of Public Works (NDPW) were concluded in 2009 for learners to access the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding. This allowed them to enrol at the college with NSFAS funding for a three-year course.

## Practical hotel training

### Coastlands Hotel

Qualification level achieved

- NCV Level 04 at FET College
- In 2012 they graduated and studied further at their own cost at N4 level to obtain national diplomas

## SAMSA training

In July 2012, the NYS and the Enterprise Development units met with the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) for possible collaboration and exit opportunities. SAMSA responded and requested candidates for hospitality positions on their sea vessels.

The four beneficiaries fitted the description and their names were forwarded to SAMSA. They were then screened medically and interviewed after which they were given permanent work at the sea.

## What the four former beneficiaries say

**Zandile Ngcobo**, a 25-year-old mother from Sobantu in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal said before joining the EPWP, she was staying at home with nothing solid to do. "Thanks to EPWP, I have now studied hospitality and am now doing training with SAMSA," she said. In addition, she would like to grow within the hospitality industry and become a pastry chef.

"EPWP is the best. I would like to thank Public Works and EPWP for giving me this opportunity and helping me live my dream. I am grateful to have been able to attend college," she said. If she succeeds she would also be the first female pastry chef on the ship. Ngcobo said she has gained a great deal of training and can now cook many different dishes she could not do before. Students were also trained in swimming at the sea and were given safety lessons to deal with emergency situations at sea.

**Sizakele Zuma**, a 30-year-old mother from Pietermaritzburg, in KwaZulu-Natal, cares for her niece and mother. Before joining the EPWP, she did not have any means to earn a living besides being a domestic worker. "The EPWP helped me develop my skills and gave me the opportunity to further my studies at a college because I did not get such an opportunity immediately after completing matric," she said.

**Khumbuzile Makhaye** (26) has not passed matric, but because of her ambition was given the opportunity to study a hospitality course at an FET college through the EPWP. "The EPWP has equipped me with skills. I would like to gain more experience in hospitality and life at sea," Makhaye said. The experiential learning she received at sea added value to her theoretical learning she received from college.

**Thandeka Sibisi**, a 23-year-old young woman matriculated in 2006 and has been unemployed, until she became an EPWP beneficiary and received training at an FET college. "I would like to thank the EPWP for the experience. If it was not for the programme, I would not be where I am today. I would also like to thank SAMSA for giving us the chance to work on the ship as hospitality management students," said Thandeka.



# Empowering the unemployed youth

By Siyabonga Mhlanga

It was a joyous occasion at the graduation ceremony of 18 beneficiaries of the Expanded Public Works Programme's National Youth Service (NYS), who graduated through the Learnership Programme on 26 October 2012 in Winterveld, Pretoria.

The NYS programme under the theme, "Empowering the unemployed youth with construction skills," worked closely with the National Youth Development Agency and the Department of Higher Education to train beneficiaries successfully. The objective of the NYS programme is to enhance skills development in the construction sector, thus contributing to job creation and training opportunities for the unemployed youth.

## Lifelong training

At the graduation, the Department of Public Works' representative, Ncumisa Ntotela, congratulated the Botsang-Ledile Construction Project, which constructed a new police station and single quarters, for the quality of their work. She also encouraged beneficiaries to register at Further Education and Training (FET) institutions to further their studies.

"Always have a spirit of learning and marketing yourself with the skills that you've acquired during the programme. You persevered to be here today and I believe this is not the end of the road as the FETs are waiting for you to register," she said. Skills are power

At the graduation ceremony graduates were given toolboxes and certificates of competency in life skills, safety representative,

setting out works, fixing steel, casting concrete, foundation setting and bricklaying.

Chester Nobela (22) from Winterveld was unemployed after completing matric but was delighted to be part of the programme. "We've been through a lot but now I know how to lay a brick and fix steel and many other things that have to do with construction. Thank you NYS for changing my life," the delighted Chester said.



## Women breaking new ground

One of the beneficiaries, Ms Ramorale, said she was pleased to acquire skills in a field that used to be only accessible to men. "I appeal to my fellow graduates to explore and show the spirit of Imbokodo in the built industry," Ramorale said.

## The future in your hands

Programme director Petrus Rampeng acknowledged the attendance of Tsepo Moetshu, contractor of Botsang-Ledile Construction Projects. Moetshu thanked the beneficiaries for their participation in the project under his supervision, and promised to retain five or more beneficiaries to work

for him after their graduation.

"Life is a challenge; make the most of any opportunity you get. As an individual, I'm glad that I can help to create job opportunities in the community and I am pleased that you all showed commitment and dedication to your work," Moetshu concluded.

*Merry Christmas  
and happy new year!*