



public works

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EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

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Northern Cape Youth given a lifetime opportunity through training

By Katlego N Mampuru



Thirty-two weeks of hard theoretical training has finally paid off for 98 Northern Cape learners who took part in the National Youth Service (NYS) training programme.

Joy was written all over their faces on graduation day on Friday, 16 September 2011 as Public Works Deputy Minister Ms Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu awarded them with certificates as testimony to the successful completion of their theoretical training.

These learners still have another 80 weeks of monitored workplace training before

they can be registered for a trade test, which is part of their 18-month training programme funded by the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) through its NYS wing. The Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa (Necsa) is the service provider assigned to train the learners.

The graduation of these learners is a continuation of the commitment of the Department of Public Works to making 2011 “the year of job creation” as proclaimed by President Jacob Zuma in his State of the Nation Address (SoNA).

“The world owes you nothing, this country owes you nothing – government should only create opportunities. It is your responsibility to improve your lives.”



In anticipation of the event, the importance of gratitude and kindness to the giver were not forgotten. On behalf of all learners on the project, Ms Pulane Jack said: "We are grateful for the opportunity given to us by the department. It's time to plough back what we have learned. How can we forget to thank all those who taught us these much needed skills? We would like to thank our supervisors and mentors for the sterling job they did."

Mr El Roy Dixon, another learner who took part in the project, was a man of few words. He simply thanked the department for the opportunity and told his counterparts that they must use every opportunity they get to make their lives better.

The Kimberley Regional Manager, Ms Sylvia Moholo, thanked all those who made the project possible and all the speakers who encouraged and talked some sense into the learners. She honoured the successes of the learners and said in their eyes she saw the readiness to make government proud. "Be team workers and achieve with others," she advised.

The NYS programme is a Department of Public Works initiative launched in April

The department secured workplace training for the learners at prominent mining companies in the Northern Cape, in addition to job training with Necsa in Pretoria.

In November 2010, officials from the department and Necsa recruited and screened unemployed youths, finally admitting 100 of them to the training project, which was officially launched by Ms Bogopape-Zulu in February 2011, in Pretoria.

Addressing the learners during the graduation ceremony, Ms Bogopane-Zulu said, "The world owes you nothing, this country owes you nothing – government should only create opportunities. It is your responsibility to improve your lives."

Ms Bogopane-Zulu challenged learners to grab opportunities that come their way with both hands. She encouraged them not to give up, but to keep on empowering themselves through skills development programmes. "You are responsible for your own life, nobody can make you do what you don't want to do," the Deputy Minister said. She told the learners that the programme was aimed at making them active participants in their communities and the economy of this country.

Deputy Minister of Higher Education Prof Hlengiwe Mkhize was also there to encourage the learners. She said that South Africa has turned the tide against unemployment and underdevelopment through the introduction of opportunities such as the

skills development programmes. She told the learners that they were fortunate to have skills development programmes that are directly linked to what they will be doing at the workplace. She further congratulated the Department of Public Works for widening access to quality training projects such as these. She concluded by persuading the learners to study further, as it would increase their employment opportunities.



Necsa acting CEO Joseph Shayi said that the corporation was committed to empowering the youth and equipping them with the skills they will need in the workplace. He also added that Necsa had an obligation of driving social and community programmes, thus the need to partner higher education sectors and government in fulfilling this obligation.

2007 to engage young South Africans in strengthening service delivery, promote nationbuilding, foster social cohesion and to assist youth to gain occupational skills necessary to access sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Gombani community celebrates Women's Month

By Lesego Moretlwe



The women of Gombani village in Mutale Local Municipality, under Vhembe District Municipality, Limpopo and the community celebrated government services through the Department of Public Works when it became the first province in the country to pilot and launch an Indigenous Building Technologies Project in the infrastructure development of rural areas.

Gombani, a poor area with an estimated total population of 150 people with high levels of unemployment and lack of education, is situated on the outskirts of Thohoyandou and is served by Mutale Local Municipality. The village has only one school, which is a primary school. This poses a serious challenge for children who are eager to continue with their secondary education, as they have to attend schools in neighbouring villages 7 – 10 km from Gombani.

Two young women who are also the sole providers for their two families head the households that were identified as the beneficiaries of this project. The two families live close to each other in one-roomed mud rondawels with thatched roofs.

Their unfavourable living conditions prompted the department and the Independent Development Trust (IDT) to select them as beneficiaries of this project.

During the two-day launch, led by the Deputy Minister of Public Works, Ms Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu in partnership with the IDT, Agreement SA, South African Women in Construction and the Mmabatho Foundation for Women, constructed one of the two houses using indigenous building technologies introduced by the Hydraform construction company.

Hydraform played a vital role in ensuring that the women of Gombani are given proper training in brick making as part of the

Women's Month activities, aimed at celebrating the role of women in the transformation and development of the construction industry.

The Hydraform brick-making process is very simple and can be mastered by any unskilled labourer under the supervision of a Hydraform trained supervisor. The construction of a building using the Hydraform brick-making method requires less mortar than the normal building process, as interlocking blocks are dry-stacked except in the foundation and the roofing block.

The Deputy Minister of Public Works, her counterpart from the Department of Human Settlements, Ms Zou Kota-Fredericks and the MEC of Public Works in Limpopo, Ms Thabitha Mohlala, were very excited about the project and rolled up their sleeves and made their mark in these life-changing projects by participating in bricklaying to ensure that the projects receive the necessary attention from their partners and the role players. Department of Public Works' officials made their contributions by going on site and assisting with the brick making and mixing mortar to plaster the house.

One of the beneficiaries, 28-year-old Mulunghufala Phatuhtshedzo, lives with her seven children, five girls and two boys ranging from 0 to 17 years. Her highest level of education is Grade 6.

The other beneficiary is 29-year-old Tshikosi Livhuwani, who lives with her son. When asked how she feels about being the resident of Gombani, she did not hesitate to answer, "I feel okay. I was born and bred here. My grandparents and my parents lived here. This is my home. I am very proud of our village. We do not experience any criminal activities in our village, we only hear about crime in other villages."

Tshikosi is a vibrant woman who matriculated from the high school in Khomele village, which is 7 km away from Gombani. She said that she would welcome every work opportunity presented to her. She regarded the project as a new chapter in their lives, because the women in her community are unemployed and depend either on the support of their spouses or government social grants.

Tshikosi said that walking 7 km to and from school every day was not an issue. She got used to it over the years. The church she attends is also in Khomele. Gombani does not have a church, or a supermarket. The local spaza shops are also not reliable because

they often run out of stock. Villagers depend mostly on their vegetable gardens for their food.

Twelve women have been identified as the beneficiaries of this project. They have been trained in the process of brick making, which includes the seven to 14 days curing stage that allows the bricks to get dry and strong before being used for building. The 12 women in the community will be driving this project of building each other a house as a cooperative of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), Non State Sector, which is funded by the Department of Public Works.

Department of Public Works honours women in the construction sector

By Mmuso Pelesa

While the country was abuzz with celebrations in honour of Women's Month in August, the Minister of Public Works Ms Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde took time to recognise and honour women who play a pivotal role in the transformation of the construction sector.

Speaking during the auspicious occasion of the fourth annual Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Women in Construction Excellence Awards, Minister Mahlangu-Nkabinde said, "As we cast our minds back to the Women's March in 1956, we take a moment to honour those heroines who bravely confronted the oppressive government of the day. Those that are still with us would share with the departed that indeed the women we are celebrating here today managed to lift the baton and carry on with the unwavering struggle for economic emancipation. We are proud of you – more so, the likes of Sophia Williams-de Bruin, Lilian Ngoyi, Raheeda Moosa and Helen Joseph. Others look at you as the generation that appreciates those that went before them. It is these heroines that I refer to... those who laid the tapestry whose comfort you enjoy here today.

"Yours is a demonstration of excellence and the assertion that indeed, given the opportunity and levelling of the playing fields, women can do it for themselves. You are a prime example of the excellence that these prestigious awards were established to honour."

The CIDB Women in Construction Excellence Awards is a momentous event whereby the National Department of Public Works, in partnership with the CIDB, reward and recognise women contractors who are providing good value to clients and are running sustainable businesses in the male-dominated construction sector. The aim of the awards is to encourage and motivate women to break gender barriers in the construction sector, and foster a culture of high performance and good practice.

The 2011 CIDB Women in Construction Excellence Awards went to women contractors who excel in delivering quality construction projects on time and are successful in managing and sustaining their businesses.

To date, 200 women contractors have been trained, thanks to the Vukuphile Contractor Development Programme under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Vukuphile, a Nguni word that means "wake up and live", is a learnership initiative targeting new contractors, nurturing them and assisting them to leave the programme and spread their wings once they have demonstrated reasonable skill and capacity.



EPWP exhibits at the Salga conference

By Khanyisa Mashele

More than 2 000 delegates, ranging from ministers, councillors, municipal managers, government officials to individual delegates attended the South African Local Government Association's (Salga) national conference, held under the theme "Building Municipal and Social Cohesion for Quality and Sustainable Services: 2011 and Beyond."



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) was among the exhibitors at the conference, targeting municipalities and creating awareness about the EPWP projects under the four sectors, namely infrastructure, environment and culture, social and non-state sectors.

As the projects are mostly implemented in municipalities, the conference gave the EPWP a platform to engage with municipal managers and councillors who expressed their gratitude and frustrations with the running of the projects. Municipalities cited the lack of funding, among other things, as a major hindrance to the smooth running of the projects.

During the break-away session at the conference, seven commissions were set up to deliberate on the following topics:

- effective governance and intergovernmental relationships
- municipal infrastructure and the delivery of services
- community development
- economic development and planning
- municipal finance and accountability
- development of human resources
- fighting corruption.

In an effort to transform municipalities into climate-change smart agents the executive mayor of Ethekewini Metropolitan Municipality, Mr James Nxumalo, highlighted the issue of climate change as an area that needs special focus.

In his opening address, the out-going chairperson of Salga, Mr Amos Masondo, challenged the delegation to think about the importance of their presence at the conference and the responsibility that they will bear as local government. He also

stated that "in us doing our work, we have to take into account the priorities of government, basic education, the fight against crime and corruption, responsive health system, decent jobs as well as rural development programme."

The conference was characterised by the celebration of municipal achievements wherein all municipalities that performed exceptionally during the past year were honoured with Clean Audit Awards.

The following municipalities were recognised for their sterling performance:

- Ehlanzeni District municipality, Mpumalanga
- Steve Tshwete Municipality, Mpumalanga
- Metsweding Municipality, Gauteng
- Victor Khanye Municipality, Mpumalanga
- City of Cape Town, Western Cape
- Frances Baard Municipality, Northern Cape
- Fetakgomo Municipality, Limpopo.

In a ceremony the National Executive Committee representative, Dr Zweli Mkhize, presented the outgoing chairperson and members of Salga with gifts in recognition of their role during their term in office.



The newly elected Salga National Executive Committee is:

- Chairperson: Cllr Thabo Manyoni (Mayor of Mangaung Metro, Free State)
- Deputy Chairperson: Cllr Nancy Sihlwayi (Deputy Mayor of Nelson Mandela Metro, Eastern Cape)
- Deputy Chairperson: Cllr Nombulelo Hermans (Mayor of Umsobomvu Municipality, Northern Cape)
- Deputy Chairperson: Cllr Mpho Nawa (Executive Mayor of Westrand District Municipality, Gauteng).

Public Works Portfolio Committee visit to the Northern Cape

By Fuziwe Kubheka

As part of its oversight role on Public Works projects, The Portfolio Committee on Public Works visited the Northern Cape province from 5 – 9 September 2011.

The programme included site visits to Agang Multipurpose Centre and Oasis Skills Development, which are non-state sector (NSS) projects in the province.



Honourable Manana Catherine Mabuza encourages the women at the Agang Multipurpose Centre.

Agang Multipurpose Centre started participating in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) NSS programme in 2010/11, with 300 work opportunities. In 2011/12, the centre was awarded 500 work opportunities. The centre is located in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality, with projects located in Batlharos, Kuruman, Gasebolao, Ncwelengwe and Vergenoeg.



A Batlharos Bakery beneficiary at the Agang Multipurpose Centre presents their products to the committee.

The centre has 311 beneficiaries employed, including 100 youths and 114 women. The centre's projects include Boitumelo Chickens, Bathlaros Bakery and the Bathlaros Financial Service, which helps the community to invest and save money towards a burial scheme. The beneficiaries have registered the financial service with the South African Micro-Finance Apex Fund (SAMAF). Beneficiaries in the Agang Brick Cooperative are making bricks and paving

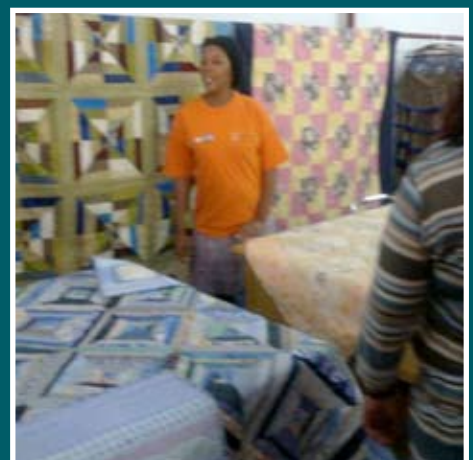


Beneficiaries of Boitumelo Chickens hold up their full chicken produce outside the Agang Multipurpose Centre.

blocks to supply their local community. The beneficiaries were struggling to contact the relevant officials to test their bricks, so that they could supply government projects. After learning about this challenge, Ms Onkemetse Gill, Chief Director of Public Works in the Northern Cape, committed herself to ensuring that the organisation is assisted with the brick testing.

The Agang Multipurpose Centre has a woman's sewing project on site led by Ms Macdaline Potelo, who presented their work to the committee. The portfolio committee chairperson Ms Manana Catherine Mabuza encouraged the beneficiaries to be meticulous and neat in their sewing, so that the local shops and commercial brands may use them as suppliers in the future.

The Oasis Skills Development project is located in Upington under the Siyanda District Municipality. The partnership between the EPWP: NSS programme and the NPO began in 2009. The



Quilts sold at the Oasis Skills Centre.

project has been awarded 100 work opportunities in 2011/12. The work opportunities created are in the educational, vocational and skills development sector. Projects include a bakery, needle work, quilt making, paving, vocational skills training for learners with disabilities, hydroponics, a tea garden and catering.



Learners with disabilities at the Oasis Skill Centre perform a recital for the portfolio committee.

The portfolio committee was humbled by the planned performances of the learners during their visit to the Oasis Skills Centre. The committee also called on the Department of Public Works (DPW), the Independent Development Trust (IDT) and the municipalities to work together with non-profit organisations to forge sustainable partnerships between the

private sector, schools and the sector department in the area. The committee commended the work of Oasis Skills Development and Agang Youth Centre and called on all stakeholders to ensure that when these organisations exit the NSS programme, they become suppliers of the school nutrition programmes and commercial businesses in the area.



Members of the portfolio committee at the Oasis Bakery.

Idah Sibuyi realises her dream

By Charlotte Vermeulen



Idah in front of her first home

What is a home without a mother or rather, what is a mother without a home?

Idah Sibuyi is the proud mother of four daughters between the ages of seven and 27 and the doting grandmother of two young grandchildren. After matriculating in Majeje (close to Phalaborwa) she moved to Pretoria in search of work. She managed to work as a security guard at a shopping centre and as a domestic helper at some stage. In 2009, she decided to move back to Phalaborwa with her children and only a few pieces of furniture and clothing.

Upon her arrival in Phalaborwa, she applied for a piece of land from the Majeje Tribal Authority so that she could erect a house for her family – one of the basic human needs.

After paying the required amount for it, she was granted a plot in Lulekani. There was nothing on it, but that did not deter Idah. Instead, it gave her the courage to work harder and remain committed to her dream.

She started off by making clay bricks and built herself a one-roomed house. It was better than nothing and only the beginning. Idah had another challenge: the clay house was not safe, especially during the rain season as the clay bricks turned into mud. There was always the danger that the house could collapse onto her family, but without a job, there was nothing much she could do.

In July 2010, a ward councilor who was aware of her desperate situation told Idah about the Working for Land Project in the Kruger National Park. The project falls under the Expanded Public Works Programme's Environment and Culture Sector. Idah was appointed as a general worker on the project, starting a new chapter in her life.

By saving money and planning carefully, Idah was able to purchase building material for a new home to build on her land. She bought cement and river sand and paid a builder to make the bricks and build the house. Bit by bit, her new home started to take shape. By December 2010, Idah moved into her new one-roomed home.



Idah's building plan for her three-bedroomed house



Idah opens the front door to her new home

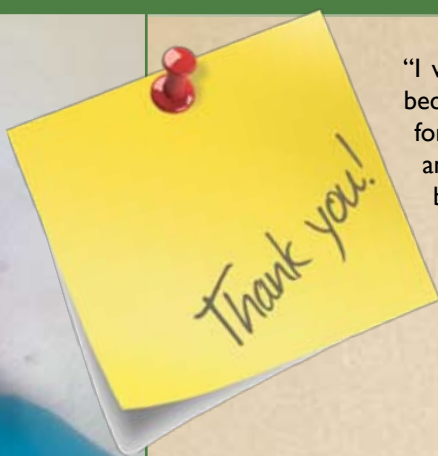
But her dreams do not end there. She still wants to plaster, paint and buy new curtains for her house. Plans to extend the house are underway. As she laughingly puts it: "I want the children out of my bedroom!"

Her dream is to eventually build a three-bedroomed house with a kitchen, living room and garage. She keeps the building plan

to extend her house safe under her mattress where it can't get lost or damaged.

According to the Development Bank of Southern Africa's analysis of green job-opportunities, Working for Land has the potential to create more than 3 485 full-time jobs by 2012.

MOTSOENENG MARIA GIVES THANKS



"I was born semi-blind. I have had to live with this condition because my family is very poor. They could not afford to pay for my eye operation, as none of my parents were working and they were not educated. They lived and worked in a farm before moving to Qwaqwa (Mabolela Village) in 1977. I also have a younger brother who is disabled.

"I would like to thank the Department of Public Works, the Independent Development Trust (IDT) and Pheko Ka Kopanelo for the opportunity they gave me."

Motsoeneng Maria (32) from Mabolela Village in Thabo Mofutsanyana District, Free State is a beneficiary of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Non State Sector Food Security Project, implemented through the Pheko Ka Kopanelo non-profit organisation (NPO). This is what she had to say about her experience:

The experience has changed my family's life and mine; I was once blind but now I can see. Through the R60 per day I am earning for 11 days each month, I managed to save for my eye operation and paid for my glasses. Today I am happy to say I can see clearly. I am now very proud of who I am because of EPWP. My family is also very proud of me, as I am able to support them.



Changing lives for the better





EPWP operations mapping way forward in EPWP implementation

By Lesego Moretlwe

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)'s Operations Directorate converged at Bela Bela in Limpopo recently for a two-day workshop to monitor its performance and map the way forward in up-scaling the EPWP implementation.

The EPWP Chief Directorate: Operations led by Ms Kelebogile Sethibelo is strategically positioned to spearhead the implementation of EPWP objectives by various EPWP sectors and give strategic advice to the leadership in ensuring that the set objectives are met.

Addressing her colleagues on the first day of the meeting, Ms Sethibelo indicated that these quarterly meetings were important in reflecting on the progress of the programme, as well as addressing the challenges and giving strategic direction on the adoption of new projects to be piloted by different sectors.

Among the attendees was Ms Mathilda Bergmann from the Department of Labour, who explained the mandate of her department with special emphasis on best labour practices and ministerial determination, which advocates the consideration of Basic Conditions of Employment in the implementation of the programme.

In highlighting some of the expectations by the Department of Labour, Ms Bergman stated that the law requires that each beneficiary who works for more than 24 hours in a month must be registered with the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) in compliance with the Unemployment Insurance Act, 2001. She

further said that since April 2002, the Department of Labour introduced the Act for the temporary workers as long as they meet the required 24 hours of work in a month. This was done to ensure that such workers also benefit from the UIF by the time their contracts expire.

Bergmann also emphasised the need for planning and living up to the principle of value for money in the implementation of the projects. "The project implementation plan needs to be thoroughly assessed to ensure that the timeframes and labour force, which are the most important factors at the implementation level, are not compromised," she remarked.

The meeting also highlighted the need for the EPWP and the Department of Labour to form a task team on Ministerial Determination in making the inputs and amendments before resolutions are officially adopted for implementation by the EPWP. A living wage for EPWP beneficiaries formed part of the presentation, which outlined that the minimum wage for the beneficiaries was R60 per day, thus ensuring that the EPWP contribute significantly to poverty alleviation.

The session included group discussions where colleagues shared their challenges, frustrations, achievements and suggestions to improve service delivery in their respective units and to meet the set targets on work opportunities. It is also envisaged that the move will help to roll out the mandate of the programme, one of government's priorities, which is to create decent work opportunities with the intention of reducing poverty.

