



public works

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## Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa) AND The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) FORM COOPERATIVES

By Lesego Moretlwe



The EPWP and Prasa launched a Train Station Cleaning and Maintenance Community Project at Umlazi in Durban in KwaZulu-Natal on 27 June 2013.

The project, which is aimed at empowering communities living along the Metrorail lines and stations with the opportunity to clean and maintain selected Metrorail train stations, is the first of three national projects that will also be launched in Gauteng and the Western Cape. The communities will be given opportunities to join formalised community cooperatives, which will be set up across 111 train stations nationally.

The cooperatives will be responsible for the overall cleaning and maintenance of train stations at key rail corridors that are currently being upgraded in preparation for the arrival of new rolling stock, with the first train sets scheduled to be delivered in 2015.

Prasa Cleaning and Maintenance Community project is in partnership with the Department

of Public Works through the EPWP, National Department of Transport, Durban University of Technology and the South African National Civic Organisation to ensure synergy and continuity through the various government empowerment initiatives driven by the respective organisations.

The project is already being aligned to the EPWP Monitoring and Evaluation Reporting System for present and possible future support.

Prasa has invested approximately R35 million per annum over the next three years with 3 616 beneficiaries to benefit from the cleaning project. The beneficiaries will be trained in cleaning, health and safety, electrical and plumbing, basic business management and life skills. A further estimated R150 million per annum over the next three years has been budgeted for the station maintenance.

Professor Bawa of the Durban University of Technology said the university will play

a higher education developmental role in community empowerment. He said the aim is to instil the culture of teaching and learning. The university will be conducting research on models to be adopted to enhance the function of the cooperatives.

The chairperson of the portfolio Committee on Transport, Ms Ruth Bhengu said, the initiative sought to empower the communities and make them the master of their own destinations as well as responsible for the maintenance of their own environment. She called upon other government departments, businesses and academics to join in partnership and give their criticism as well as advice in moving forward in the upliftment of communities.

All the partners signed a pledge as an undertaking to support the initiative and its objectives in providing excellent cleanliness and maintenance services to the community.



# Emerging contractor benefit from the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)

By: Kgomoetso Mathuloe



Vuk'uphile (wake up and live), is a learnership programme under the EPWP infrastructure sector, which seeks to increase emerging building-contractor capacity to deal with the increasing amount of labour-intensive work opportunities under the EPWP.

The programme identifies potential entrepreneurs who are unemployed and provide them with opportunities to establish new businesses and to compete in the open market once they exit the programme.

One of the beneficiaries of the programme is Salamina Modiselle from Themba in Brits, North West who joined the programme in 2006. Before joining the programme she was a caterer without any experience in the construction industry.

"I was given theoretical and practical training and also learnt how to run my business, market it, complete tender documents and financial management. The learnership was advertised in the local newspaper," said Ms Modiselle.

"My first project was worth R1 million and entailed paving of the road. It was a three-month project but I managed to finish it in two months and employed more than 15 people, she added.

According to Ms Modiselle, Vuk'uphile has really improved her skills. She is now able to market her business. Since completing the

programme, she has won tenders to do construction maintenance at the Constitutional Court and the South African Social Security Agency.

***"With the profit that I made I was able to buy my first car, thanks to EPWP Vuk'uphile," added Ms Modiselle.***

# Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) embark on projects site visits with the Public Works Business Improvement Unit (BIU)

By: Khanyisa Mashele

The BIU and the EPWP sector managers undertook a site visit to three EPWP projects in the Eastern Cape. These projects are the Siyakholwa Development Foundation, the Cemforce Easy Loo Project and the Middleburg Waste Management Cooperative.

The Siyakholwa Development Foundation, situated in the Amahlathi Local Municipality, has been in existence since 2009. It aims to alleviate poverty and improve the living standards of the community members in Amahlathi. Some of the projects that this foundation is involved in are: the mini maize project; renovation of schools and crèches; food gardening.

The main function of the Siyakholwa Development Foundation, as part of the Community Work Programme, is to implement EPWP projects.

Part of the training that the Siyakholwa Development Foundation offers is focused on skills development in areas such as life skills, early childhood development, engineering, vehicle maintenance, first aid, cemetery cleaning, sewing, honey compound, vegetable and fruit gardening.

The project has just over 1 500 EPWP beneficiaries. More community members are being encouraged to participate in the programme and form co-operatives that will help them to develop sustainable livelihoods.

A number of schools and crèches have been renovated by the beneficiaries who form part of the programme. Through the foundation's skills development training, a number of jungle gyms have been built for the schools and crèches. The foundation has also refurbished old school desks for some schools.

The Cemforce Easy Loo Project is a contracted service provider that provides toilets to the community around Queenstown.

The factory runs six production lines in the manufacturing of the Easy Loo System that is made of lightweight, precast and glass-reinforced concrete panels that are put together to form a toilet structure.

EPWP beneficiaries form part of the 200 people employed in the project, which makes around 200 toilets a day, with nearly 4 000 units completed and installed per month. The project also involves local community members when the installation of the panels starts. This assists the community members to gain skills in the construction of toilets.

The Middleburg Waste Management co-operatives was established in 1997.

The main scope of the project is the collection of waste, waste buy-back, environmental education and the minimising of waste.

The project employs 66 EPWP beneficiaries. While the project has come across many challenges, it has moved from strength-to-strength through bilateral agreements with the local municipality. The project's workforce collects plastic bottles, plastics, boxes and cans, which are sorted and bailed to be sold.

Through the growth of the project, community members gained environmental education and learnt the

importance of recycling waste. Once a month the project sends a truck full of waste to the Germiston plant in Gauteng, where the waste is sold in exchange for money, which is used as part of the wages/stipends for the beneficiaries.

The project is self-sufficient but also receives assistance in form of funding from government departments and its stakeholders.

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# Lehlohonolo George Ntsiane – Expanded Public Works (EPWP) beneficiary

Lehlohonolo George Ntsiane from the Free State, is the first born of four siblings, two brothers and two sisters. After completing his matric he wished to further his studies but could not do so due to financial constraints. He had to find work so that he could assist his mother, who is a single parent, to support his siblings.

He started out as a professional hairdresser and eventually ended up having his own salon. At that time he believed that hairdressing was his passion, until he heard of the EPWP National Youth Service (NYS) from the National Department of Public Works and made an application to join the Programme.

The Department of Public Works identified him from the database of the National Youth Development (NYDA) where he enrolled for youth opportunities. He went through the recruitment process and was successfully recruited into the NYS Programme for nine months where he learnt construction and plumbing. The fields of training comprised three-month theoretical training, which was followed by the six-months on-site training. "This was quite a drastic change for me as I was used to being all neat and dressed up at all times, whereas on site, I had to wear an overall and get my hands really dirty."

He acquired a certificate after the successful completion of his training. "It was such a heart-warming feeling to eventually see the results of one's hard work paying off, thanks to the Department of Public Works".

"After completing the skills development programme I started marketing myself and worked with one of the local construction companies, Johnny Bravo Construction, where my interest in plumbing grew even further. Later on I started doing maintenance for the Tempe Military Base in Bloemfontein. With the money from my newly found career I am able to support my family. I managed to help my brother who completed his matric and is now working as a police officer and I have now relieved my mother from the responsibility of taking my other siblings through school".

"I must really say that through the EPWP NYS Programme I managed to bring dignity back into my family. Furthermore, I would not have



known my passion for construction – plumbing in particular. I would possibly still be working at the salon with no new challenges. In the construction maintenance field, I have the opportunity to learn a lot every day. My eyes are now open to new opportunities and I really love and enjoy my job as a plumber".

"From the bottom of my heart I really want to say thank you to the National Department of Public Works for initiating such a good programme as the EPWP NYS; to the contractor who was so patient in training youth that knew little if anything at about construction; and to God the Almighty who brought me this life-changing opportunity."





# West Coast College caps record-breaking number of students

By: Dumihlezi Mahlangu



Almost 500 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) social sector learners were capped in two different ceremonies at the Western Cape West Coast College's fifth annual graduation ceremony in May 2013. A host of dignitaries including the Deputy Mayor of the Swartland Local Municipality Ms Maude Goliath as well as the well-known television and media personality, Ms Natalie Becker attended the ceremony.

In addition to college officials, the ceremony also attracted representatives from government departments, sector education and training authorities (Setas), other education colleges and local industry as well as businesses.

The ceremony saw 494 students graduating. In the first leg, from a group of 230 students, 198 graduates received certificates in Early Childhood Development (ECD) while 32 graduates received the Further Education and Training (FET) Certificate: School Business Administration, which represented another milestone for the college.

West Coast College Deputy Principal for Academic Affairs, Mr Mike Mavovana, thanked the learners for being part of the learning curve. "With persistence and hard work you managed to successfully complete your qualification," he said.

This training was designed to equip school administrators and secretaries with a range of skills to administer and manage certain functions that will allow the school principal a chance to concentrate more on the academic and curriculum development, which is the core function of the school.

Mavovana highlighted that in addition to the 198 ECD practitioners who received certificates, a total of 379 learners have already successfully completed training and received certificates and that this is besides the 560 practitioners currently on training. "This demonstrates West Coast College's intention to alleviate poverty by making the youth more employable," explained Mr Mavovana.

Guest speaker Ms Sandra Fortuin, Chief Education Specialist: Institutional Management and Governance at the Western Cape Education Department shared with the student teachers the three disciplines of value in education.

These, she said are, the apple for good health; the lighthouse for giving direction in the dark and the book for giving knowledge to the young children that ECD teachers have to care for and nurture on a daily basis.

Speaking at the second ceremony of the National Certificate (Vocational) and Diploma graduates, West Coast College Principal Ms

Osma Jooste-Mokgethi thanked the lecturers and support staff for their tireless efforts to improve results and academic performances.

"Clearly, the academic support systems and measures that have been put in place in the last two years, are beginning to bear fruit," she said. "The results did not arrive by accident, it is the culmination of focused attention and long hours of work," she said.

She revealed that the Level 4 Class of 2012 increased with a whopping 13,2% compared to the previous year; and the certification rate improved from 53,5% to 61%, which represents a significant improvement of 7,5% from the previous year.

Ms Jooste-Mokgethi was pleased that the pass rate of the Engineering programmes has improved from 40% in 2011 to 45,4%; Office Administration improved from 51% in 2011 to a massive 70,7% and Hospitality improved from 52,4% to another massive 75%.

"In 2011 the college had 70 distinctions in various subjects, however the Class of 2012 boasts with no less than 112 distinctions," she added.

"I want to congratulate all of you and at the same time pay tribute to the parents and families of each one of you who contributed to the success of your studies. Very often the role that families play in support of the student is downplayed. But I think it is just proper that we also say thank you to all of you," said Ms Jooste-Mokgethi.

Ms Natalie Becker, an award winning actress, presenter, voice artist and guest speaker at the ceremony said: "In life everybody wins," and relayed in great detail how she had to persevere to complete the New York Marathon.

"Life is a marathon and not a sprint. I was faced with the immense challenge to complete this marathon. When you are not moved by circumstances, circumstances move you. Every challenge you face, whether it's mental, physical or emotional, brings you closer to your destiny. As you go out into the unfamiliar world you will either feel new ground under your feet or you will learn to fly," explained Ms Becker.

She reminded the graduates to appreciate the small things in life and to surround themselves with positive and inspirational peers who will help them succeed.

In closing the ceremony, the Chairperson of the College Council, Prof AC Redelinghuis, asked the graduates to acknowledge people who played a role in their success. "Always be reminded that other people sacrificed time, money and resources to get you to this point where you are," he concluded.



# North West hosts an After-Action Review Workshop

By: Fuziwe Kubheka



The North West province conducted an Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Non-State Sector After-Action Review Workshop. This was held to evaluate the Non-State Sector Non-Profit Organisations' (NSS-NPOs) progress on EPWP deliverables in line with the programme implementation plans signed in June 2012 for the 2012/13 financial year.

The presentation outlined evaluation per NPO and focused on reporting in line with the signed implementation plan and identified enablers and inhibitors of the projects implemented. At the end of each presentation the NPOs presented a report on improvements for the next financial year and solutions for the inhibitors.

## **The achievements that North West presented were:**

- EPWP created 400 work opportunities through a partnership with an NPO called Angels of Tomorrow, and the Mahikeng Local Municipality under the Mahikeng Revitalisation Project, which is implemented in the Mahikeng Local Municipality. The demographic details of the beneficiaries in the Mahikeng Revitalisation Project are 100% youth, 66,2% women and 3,1% people with disabilities.
- The Itekgeng Community Centre is another NPO contracted to the EPWP: NSS programme. The NPO provided 800 work opportunities in 2012/13, of which 100% of the beneficiaries were young people.
- The NPO has sustainably developed by merging with 33 satellite NPOs and created work opportunities throughout North West.
- The NPO also developed a poultry farm as part of its sustainability projects. The poultry farming project is sponsored by the

Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the local farmers.

- A brick-making project is also part of the NPO's sustainability projects. The brick-making project was funded by the Helen Mine in Swartruggens through the donation of brick machinery. Another company called HS Vervoer Mine also donated a crusher mix, sand and cement.

The NPO's projection is that these projects will enable the NPO to sustain itself.

The After-Action Review assists the programme to build the NPOs' presentation and marketing skills. The NPOs are able to learn from one another based on the reported accomplishments. The key lesson of the After-Action Review is that NPOs must drive the initiative of private-public-partnerships. The NPOs learnt that they had to create an enabling environment for the programme to be successful.

## **The following points were listed as enablers:**

- networking and good communication with relevant stakeholders; supportive board members and ward councillors
- support from the Independent Development Trust and the Department of Public Works
- involvement and participation of the community members
- availability of funds and proper financial management systems
- community mobilisation of the EPWP programme
- willingness by beneficiaries to contribute towards the programme
- cooperative staff members.