



public works

Department:
Public Works
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Expanded Public Works Programme

Launch of the EPWP/merSETA

Artisan Development Programme

*Lynville Stadium, Emalahleni (Witbank)
10h00, 26 June 2015*

Input by:

T.W. Nxesi MP, Minister of Public Works

Protocol:

- Programme Director – Mr Morolo, DD-G: Public Works, Roads and Transport
- Ms Dumisile Nhlengethwa, MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport
- Ms Reginah Mhaule, MEC for Education
- Councillor Salome Sithole, Executive Mayor for Emalahleni Local Municipality
- Councillors Paul van Castle and Jerry Radebe
- Representatives of our partners in this programme:
 - The Department of Higher Education and Training and the NSF (National Skills Fund)
 - The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) – represented by Dr Raymond Patel (CEO), and
 - merSETA registered companies where the artisan learners have been placed
- Officials of the EPWP and the Department of Public Works
- Ladies and gentlemen, and
- Most importantly, the young artisan learners who are present here.

In fact let me mention by name every company that has partnered with us in this training programme:

- From Gauteng:
 - Genrec Engineering

- Powertech Transformers
 - WIKA Instruments
 - Masedi E&I Construction
- From the Eastern Cape:
 - Volkswagen of SA
 - Fred's Auto Electrical
- From KZN:
 - Dragon Precision Engineering
- From Mpumalanga:
 - Murray and Roberts (Kusile Project)
 - Tubula Structural Engineering
 - FSL Smidth Buffalo (Pty) Ltd
 - Thos Begbie and Co
- From Limpopo:
 - PM trading Connection
 - Mmushi Car Service
 - I-Vision
- From Free State:
 - Ikhephu Air
 - SAMIC Engineering Trust
 - Coetzee Hersteldienste
 - Strado
- From the Western Cape:
 - Motolec
 - Damen Shipyards
 - Senior Flexonics SA

- Automax Service & Fitment Centre
- Myplas (Pty) Ltd
- CFW Industries
- Automagneto
- From the North West:
 - Maemo Motors
 - Mafikeng Toyota
 - Rustenburg Toyota
 - Supreme Auto
 - WCJ Electrical

Thank you again to each of you. Without you we would not be able to offer this kind of traditional artisan training which depends so much on the practical 'on-the-job training' – in addition to theoretical learning.

Let me also thank the organisers of this important event for the opportunity to share some thoughts with you this morning. What could be more important than the youth of our country – facing so many challenges? – and what could be more important than initiatives such as this – to provide training both to address the skills shortage in the country and to ensure that these young people become qualified and extremely employable?

June 16: Youth Month

It is also wholly appropriate that we are holding this event in Youth Month – when traditionally we come together to remember the heroes

of June 16, 1976 and say thank you to those who laid down their lives so that we might know freedom.

The Youth of today face different challenges. Speaking on June 16th, President Zuma pointed to the new challenges facing the Youth of South Africa - the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment. He went on to say that: “*To tackle these challenges successfully, you must empower yourselves through education (and training).*”

This is why Education is the single biggest item in government spending and more than R6 billion per year is invested in the National Student Financial Aid Scheme.

One of the biggest difficulties facing our high school learners is knowing which career to choose. In this regard, almost 900,000 young people were supported through the NYDA's (National Youth Development Agency) career guidance programmes.

We are also building more institutions of higher learning - including three new universities and 12 new technical and vocational training colleges.

We also know that the Youth is bearing the brunt of high levels of unemployment – the result of deep-rooted structural weaknesses in the economy – made worse by the international economic crisis following

the financial crash of 2008. Government has responded with a number of initiatives:

- Incentives for businesses to employ young people.
- We are also encouraging young people to become entrepreneurs. The Industrial Development Corporation in partnership with the NYDA (National Youth Development Agency) and the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) have ring-fenced 2,7 billion rand over the next five years for young people to take up opportunities in business.
- In the last financial year also, the NYDA supported one thousand and forty three (1,043) micro and small youth owned enterprises.
- Furthermore, the NYDA has provided non-financial business development support to 63,000 young aspiring and established entrepreneurs.
- As well as providing finance and training, government supports young entrepreneurs through a mentorship programme – where they can be guided and advised by established entrepreneurs.
- The National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC) provides skills in fields such as construction and agriculture - as well as discipline and good citizenship.

- The successful Expanded Public Works Programme also provides opportunities of training and short-term employment for young people.
- Government departments are also providing various training and development programmes that they offer nationally and provincially, as well as in municipalities throughout the country.

In his June 16th speech, President Zuma also unveiled the establishment of a Presidential Youth Working Group to oversee five programmes to support the Youth. These are:

1. Economic Participation and Transformation
2. Education, Skills and Second Chances
3. Health Care and Combating Substance Abuse
4. Nation Building and Social Cohesion, and
5. Building Effective and Responsive Youth Development Institutions.

So watch this space.

The opportunities are there – take them

The President closed his June 16th speech with these words:

“Our message to young people today is that every young person must take responsibility for their own development and for the path towards economic freedom.

While government and business can provide the opportunities, young people themselves must take the initiative to develop themselves and those around them.

We also urge you today, to play your role in building a better South Africa and a stronger, united nation.

We therefore ask you to do a few small things which will contribute a lot to building your country”:

- 1. Be your brother’s or sister’s keeper to create a more caring society.*
- 2. Show respect and care for older persons, your parents and grandparents.*
- 3. Promote voluntarism in your community and work to build what is broken, support the vulnerable and perform any other tasks that build your community.*
- 4. Promote and defend democracy, its values and institutions in memory of the young freedom fighters of June 1976.*
- 5. Participate in political processes and use your hard won democratic right to vote. Local government elections are coming next year. Prepare yourselves to vote by applying for identity documents without delay.*
- 6. Protect and respect public property, symbols, signs and institutions in the country.*
- 7. Finally, let us work together to promote our African identity.*

If we do all this, we will transform this country and create a better place for all.”

Above all else this morning, that is the point that I want to make: the opportunities are there – where once, as black youth, you were excluded – now the doors of education and training have been opened – but you must walk through those doors of learning – and that means discipline and commitment to study and to work for your goals.

Let me tell you what I know – let me speak about the training and employment opportunities we have developed in the Department of Public Works.

Let me begin with the EPWP (Expanded Public Works Programme). In Phase 3 of the Programme we are committed to creating 6 million work opportunities between 2014 and 2019 – with increased focus on youth and training. We are on track with over one-and-a-quarter million work opportunities in the first year – 55% of these targeted towards the Youth. These are created by public bodies across the three spheres of government – national, provincial and municipal – and across 4 sectors:

- Infrastructure (construction and maintenance)
- Social
- Environment and Culture, and
- Non-state (ie working through NPOs, NGOs and faith-based organisations)

Let me give practical examples of the training offered:

- The National Youth Service, part of EPWP Infrastructure is currently training 3,600 young people as artisans in trades like carpentry, building and plumbing.
- In the Environment and Culture sector we have a number of programmes addressing skills shortages in the tourism and hospitality industry:
 - To date, 1,760 unemployed youth were enrolled in the Chefs Training Programme – some of the graduates are now working overseas, others have started their own businesses;
 - During the last year, 3,434 unemployed youth passed through the Tourism Training Programme. Graduates of this programme have a high subsequent employment rate in the tourism industry.
 - The Working on Fire Programme to train Fire Fighters.
- In the EPWP Social Sector there are a number of training programmes for: Early Childhood Development practitioners; teaching assistants; Home Community Based Carers; Primary Health Counsellors; Youth Workers; Pharmacy and Nursing Assistants; and Sports Administrators.

As I said, I will talk of that which I know. At the end of 2011 I was appointed Minister of Public Works – which was facing all kinds of challenges at the time – one of which was the fact that it was a highly

technical department – which lacked many of the technical skills needed to operate in the construction and property environment.

So as part of our Turnaround Plan we decided to grow our own technical capacity. Public Works now has active schools, bursary, candidacy, internship and artisan programmes with some 1,297 participants – focusing on our skills shortages as a department.

Two years ago, in order to address negative audit findings – and as part of a programme to improve financial management of the Department – we employed over 100 unemployed commerce graduates – working under qualified supervision – to go out to all the regions to work on audit problems. I am pleased to say that over half of those unemployed graduates were offered employment in the private sector, the rest remaining with Public Works. *[We also got an unqualified audit as the department.]*

Last year the Department trained 120 youths in KZN and Mpumalanga to operate water treatment services – under supervision. Currently a further 320 unemployed chemical engineering and science graduates are receiving training and will be appointed to 97 water facilities across the country.

Other programmes include the following

- Providing assistance to students from FET and Higher Education Institutions with workplace /experiential training and internship to

meet requirements of their qualifications enabling them to be employable;

- Learnerships - which offer unemployed matriculants a training opportunity whilst also giving them access to employment opportunities. Areas of training include:
 - Office Administration
 - Public Sector Accounting
 - Customer Management
 - Information Technology
 - General Security Services

- Two types of Internships are offered:
 - 36 month Technical Internships (Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering; Quantity Surveying, Building Science, Construction Project Management, Architectural Studies, Town Planning, Property Valuation, Water Care, Interior Design, Property Studies, Water Care, Analytical Chemistry, Environmental Studies)
 - 24 month Support Internships: Supply Chain Management, Internal Audit, Communications, Public Relations, Human Resource Management, International Relations, Legal Services, Office Administration, Customer and Client Management, Security management, Strategic Management, Operations Management, Economic Development

- Artisan Development Programme – *the programme we are officially launching today* – to assist Youth to obtain Artisanship status with the aim of capacitating the technical Workshop structure of Public Works.
- Young Professionals /Candidacy Programme - is aimed at creating a flow of professionals into the construction sector. Graduate candidates are taken through structured mentorship linked to professional registration with a built environment sector professional council. Areas of training include: Engineering (Structural, Civil, Electrical, Mechanical); Quantity Surveying, Construction Project Management, Town Planning, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Property Studies, Interior Design. Upon completion and attainment of a Professional registration, these candidates are absorbed into permanent posts.
- Property and Asset Management Development Programme - is aimed at training graduates in specialised areas within the Property and Asset Management sections of the department such as ; Investment Analysis, Industry Research, Asset Management, Property Development and Finance, Horticulture,

I was speaking about what I know in Public Works – but there are many other Departments and services, as well as the private sector – all require skilled and motivated employees. To young people I would say: Find out what is available; decide what you are interested in; work and study hard and you will make it.

Launch of the EPWP/merSETA Artisan Development Programme

Today we are here to officially launch the EPWP/merSETA Artisan Development Programme. So let me briefly list the main features of this programme:

- The programme started in 2014 and by 2019 a total of 330 young people will have received the Artisan Development training.
- The programme is jointly funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training through the National Skills Fund, and the merSETA (Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority).
- The National Department of Public Works: EPWP entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the merSETA to project manage the training and place learners in the merSETA registered companies for apprenticeship training.
- The wages of the learners are paid by the registered employers as per the relevant Bargaining council rates.
- Learners were recruited from present and past EPWP projects such as the National Youth Service, Working on Fire, as well as Social Sector, Environment and Culture Sector and Non-state Sector projects. Preference was given to fully qualified candidates who met the minimum entry requirements for the trades as laid out by

merSETA and its companies which were: English, Maths and Physical Science or N2 qualifications relevant to the trades. So these learners have already demonstrated their commitment and ability to study and work.

- While in the company for 3 to 4 years the apprentices receive the theoretical, practical and workplace training. On-the-job training is alternated with periods of training-centre-based learning. Apprentices also receive on-going mentoring with a qualified mentor and a tailored development plan to ensure their success in the industry. At the end, the apprentices will undertake a Trade Test to qualify with an Artisan Certificate issued by the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations.
- Currently, during the first phase of the programme the following trades are being offered:

Trade Title	Number of Apprentices
Air-conditioning and refrigeration	3
Auto Electrician	5
Automotive Electrician	1
Autotronic	9
Boilermaker	21
Diesel Mechanic	12
Electrician	32
Fitter & Turner	3
Motor Mechanic	3

- So this programme is based on a partnership between public funders and entities and private companies – in which everyone wins;
 - The young participants have been afforded an opportunity for lifelong learning – whilst earning a wage - which will dramatically improve their standard of living with a qualification which will empower them to earn an income and even to start their own businesses and become employers themselves;
 - The programme has enabled the companies to upgrade their facilities so that they could meet their accreditation requirements with merSETA – as well as providing a source of scarce skills;
 - The programme also helps government to meet its demand for qualified artisans – which is essential to meet the objectives of the National Development Plan and the targets set in the National Growth Path.
 - It also meets the needs of education and training institutions for work placements for their students.

The Artisan Development Programme demonstrates, once again, the effectiveness of our approach that ‘working together we can achieve so much more’.

Concluding remarks

We are meeting here on a very significant day – June 26th. That will not mean much to the young people, but some of the older people present will remember that – in the years before the 1994 elections – June 26th was known, internationally, as ‘South African Freedom Day. It has a long and proud history:

- Beginning in 1950 with national protests against the repression of the Apartheid government;
- In 1952 the Defiance Campaign was launched on 26th June;
- In 1955, the Freedom Charter was adopted on this day.

So it is very fitting that we officially launch the EPWP/merSETA Artisan Development Programme on this historic day – symbolising the fact that the doors of learning and training opportunities are now opened to all – where once black youngsters were excluded.

To the young artisan learners, I would say this:

- You have been selected because of the hard-work and commitment you showed previously.
- Keep up the hard work; learn those scarce skills – and keep on studying and learning. There is always more to learn. [*Let me share with you – that even after qualifying as a teacher in the 1980s I continued to study. Even today I am still registered as a student.*]

- There is a saying: ‘the world is your oyster’ – meaning the opportunities are out there, the sky is the limit – whether you:
 - Come to work for Public Works – and we will welcome you;
 - Move to the private sector;
 - Open your own business, or
 - Go for further training.

It depends on you. Follow your dream – in doing so you develop yourself, you support your family and you contribute to the economic well-being of your community and the country.

I thank you.