

## **EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (EPWP)**

### **KAMOSO AWARDS CEREMONY**

#### **KEYNOTE ADDRESS:**

**TW NXESI MP, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**BIRCHWOOD HOTEL, FRIDAY, 17 AUGUST 2012**

#### **Protocol:**

- Programme Director
- Deputy Minister of Public Works: Hon Jeremy Cronin
- MECs
- Members of parliament and provincial legislatures
- Executive Mayors
- Councillors
- Acting Director-General of the Department of Public Works, and senior staff in all spheres of government
- Heads of Departments and Municipal Managers
- CEOs and representatives from supporting entities
- Members of the media
- And most important of all our Award winners

Ladies and gentlemen

Good evening and welcome.

As we observe women's month and celebrations continue countrywide, I would like to take this opportunity to dedicate these awards to the women of South Africa – who so often bear a double – or even triple burden of oppression. It is also vital that EPWP programmes continue to benefit women and men equally.

***Wathint' Abafazi Wa thint' imbokodo! ligama la makosikazi ma libongwe!***

### **The Kamoso Awards**

Moving on. Let us remember the reason we are gathered here tonight – to celebrate the successes and collective and individual efforts of EPWP implementers.

[On a lighter note: we are coming from a very successful Olympic Games – my concern is that the Kamoso Award winners will also be expecting gold medals. .. unfortunately the budget won't run to that – although there is no doubt that you all deserve gold medals.]

I need to say a few words about the Awards. The Kamoso Awards were first held in February 2007 as a platform to recognise municipalities, provinces, departments, public entities and individuals who excelled in implementing the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the preceding year.

The Kamoso Awards recognise the EPWP as a key government programme aimed at improving the general socio-economic conditions of all South Africans.

The objectives of the awards include the following:

- To acknowledge implementing bodies that have performed well in terms of the objectives of the EPWP;
- To mobilise government stakeholders and partners to increase their efforts around the implementation of the EPWP;
- To communicate and showcase progress, impact and successes of the EPWP, and to use the awards event as a platform to enhance the visibility of the EPWP and reinforce its objectives to the broader public; and
- To promote the creation of labour intensive work opportunities; and

The Kamoso Awards recognise excellence in the implementation of projects from all four EPWP sectors, namely:

- *Infrastructure* – which focuses on increasing the labour-intensity of government-funded infrastructure projects as well as providing training and skills development to locally employed workers, and building cost-effective quality assets;
- *Social sector* – this involves creating work opportunities in public social programmes such as community-based health care and Early

Childhood Development. As a former teacher, I have to emphasise this one. All the international research indicates that good ECD provides a sound basis for subsequent success and optimum throughput rates in the schooling system. So not only do we provide work opportunities, we also directly impact on the quality of education provision in the country. In every sense – a win-win situation.

- *Environment and Culture sector* – creating work opportunities in public environment programmes such as the Working for Water Programme as well as cleaning public spaces and parks.
- *Non-state Sector* – working with NGOs, Community Based Organisations and Faith Based Organisations on job creation. This includes the Community Work Programme implemented by Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

### **EPWP and the Triple Challenge**

In his 2012 State of the Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma identified poverty, unemployment and inequality as the triple challenges facing South Africa today. That is why EPWP is a lead flagship programme of the Department of Public Works and of government. It remains the key government initiative aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment through the provision of work opportunities.

Our task as DPW is to lead a concerted effort from all spheres of government, business, public bodies and all other role players to implement EPWP - to optimise the allocated resources to address the challenges identified by the President.



With this in mind, we need to look forward and ask ourselves the following questions:

- How do we radically expand the scope and content of the Expanded Public Works Programme?
- We have to be very creative here. I am not talking about creating jobs as an end in itself – where only the affected individuals benefit. We are talking here about creating employment opportunities as part of a broader strategy to develop communities as a whole.

In rural development we talk about building vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities. How does EPWP fit into that vision for example.

- In turn we have to ask: how do we build our own capacity - as a Department, and in partnership with provinces and municipalities – to create work opportunities and to monitor, manage and report on such projects.
- We also need to scrutinise infrastructure roll out plans to ensure that EPWP thinking - on labour intensive methodologies and job creation – is enshrined in contracts with service providers.

The 2011/12 Kamoso Awards Ceremony is of particular significance as it represents a milestone for the EPWP in drawing a significant number of municipalities and other implementing bodies into implementing this Programme. I am elated to announce that to date, out of 278

municipalities, 277 of them are implementing the EPWP. It goes without saying that indeed together we can do more.

[On a lighter note: I am tempted to ask Mr Henderson for the name of the one remaining municipality that is not participating in the EPWP... maybe later, in private.]

In ensuring the smooth implementation of the EPWP in municipalities, the EPWP Integrated Incentive Grant Model has been reviewed to provide a rural bias to enable rural municipalities to access the funding upfront thus enabling these municipalities to start with new projects and create work opportunities.

I really want to commend all the implementers of the EPWP who are complying with the EPWP processes in reporting their progress.

**On a very positive note: we are also here to celebrate the achievement of the creation by EPWP of over 2 million work opportunities between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2012. There can be no doubt that EPWP is working.**

### **DPW Turnaround Strategy**

I want to say something to officials of DPW present here: If EPWP can deliver, there is no reason why the other branches of the Department should not be able to succeed as well. That after all is the premise of our Turnaround Strategy – to paraphrase President Obama: Yes we can – turn around this Department.

Let me take a moment to share with you my overall approach. Upfront, I need to state that there are two legs to the Turnaround Strategy:

1. *Zero Tolerance of Fraud and Corruption, and*
2. *Improvement of the Business Operations and Performance of the Department*

I have said that corruption is non-negotiable. Measures already taken include:

- Investigations by the SIU (Special Investigations Unit);
- Suspension and disciplinary processes in regard to a number of senior officials – which will lead to criminal prosecutions;
- Review of irregular leases and court action to overturn such leases;
- Review of procurement processes.

These processes are on-going.

In terms of improving business operations and performance of the Department, a number of stabilisation projects are already in place to tackle the main weaknesses and threats to the Department, including the following:

- Securing a clean audit
- Drawing up an Immovable Assets Register
- Reviewing the leases, and
- Initiating customer-oriented business practices to improve service.

I should add, that if as a department we are going to improve operations and performance we will have to also put in place processes to monitor and evaluate the performance of the Department, the regions and managers.

## **Expansion of EPWP**

In my budget speech in May this year, I indicated that despite the challenges that we are facing as DPW, much good work is being done.



In particular, I shared plans for the expansion of the EPWP through labour intensive projects that would uplift the socio economic status of our communities. Those expansion areas include the following:

- Replication of the Zibambebe Road Maintenance Programme to be funded through the new Provincial Roads Maintenance Grant;
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- Strengthening technical support to municipalities to ensure improved implementation and reporting of projects.
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- Acceleration of the Environment and Culture Sector of EPWP – including a wide range of projects for example on: water conservation, waste processing, fire prevention; as well as sustainable energy and greening and gardening services;
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- Acceleration of the Social Sector – including mass sports participation, school nutrition programmes and the mass literacy campaign – Kha Ri Gude;
- 
- Rehabilitation and maintenance of branch railway lines, maintenance of border fences, and
- 
- Expanding the National Youth Service Programme and Community Work Programme in partnership with the Non-State Sector.

I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight the commitments made by government in addressing the triple challenge. In his budget vote speech, the Minister of Finance, Mr Pravin Gordhan, reaffirmed that job creation is the central priority of government. He has deemed it



appropriate to dig deeper into the state coffers, increasing the budget of the EPWP as follows:

- An additional amount of R4.8 billion has been allocated to the EPWP over the MTEF period, bringing the total allocation to R77.8 billion.
- The Community Work Programme received an additional R3.5 billion over the MTEF period - adding up to a total budget of R6.2 billion which will increase the number of work opportunities to 332 000 by 2014/15.
- The Non State Sector received an additional R345 million to give a total amount of R1.1 billion.
- The Working for Water and Working on Fire programmes received R1.1 billion bringing the total budget to R7.7 billion - providing for 135 000 jobs over the medium term.
- The National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC) was allocated R200 million bringing the total amount to R900 million over the next three years.
- Lastly, R300 million was added to the Environment and Culture Sector for job creation.

I would therefore plead with you:

- To fully utilize these allocated budgets

- To adhere to the National Treasury regulations, especially with regard to the Division of Revenue Act (DORA) as it pertains to the EPWP Incentive Grants, and
- To ensure that our beneficiaries and our communities get *value for money*.

Let me also assure the public that the National Treasury will continuously monitor the utilization of these funds to ensure adherence to the set targets for the creation of work opportunities, and to ensure accountability and good governance.

As we reflect on the EPWP work opportunities targets to be achieved, and what we have already created, I would like to emphasise that we are on target for the 4.5 million work opportunities that we have to create by 2014. This will make a significant impact on people's lives, as well as contributing to one of the Millennium Development Goals of halving unemployment by 2014.

We need to remind ourselves that EPWP is much more than just the work opportunity statistics reported. It is always a humbling experience to listen to the beneficiaries of this Programme sharing their testimonies about the EPWP. We must never forget that they are the reason we do what we do as EPWP and DPW.

Indeed the testimonies of the EPWP beneficiaries are telling. Some examples of what beneficiaries say:

- "I can now send my child to school"
- "This is the first job that I've ever held" and
- "For the first time in my life I can now sleep on a bed".

Ladies and gentleman, I am humbled by your hard work and commitment to realise the objectives of the Expanded Public Works Programme and your continuous innovations to improve the Programme and to further alleviate unemployment and poverty in the country.

In closing, let me acknowledge the respective and vital roles played by our partners in the implementation of the EPWP, and most importantly the Independent Development Trust (IDT) as our implementing agent – who we entrust with the responsibility to maximise the utilisation of the allocated resources, and ensure that indeed together we can do more.

As we work together with different stakeholders - including provinces, public entities, municipalities, Non Profit Organisations and implementing agents - I urge the officials of DPW to provide leadership and give our partners the maximum support that they need. We cannot work in silos if we are to make these partnerships work for the benefit of our communities.

Let me acknowledge the hard work of the organisers of this event as well as the participants who have responded to the call by the DPW to enter for the EPWP Kamoso Awards nominations. I hope that these awards will encourage and motivate us all to redouble our efforts in taking the EPWP to new heights of achievement in the years ahead.

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