

27 August 2021



issue 50

EPWP Bi-Weekly Bulletin

THE EPWP MAKES A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE LIFE OF A GOUDA RESIDENT

By Hildegard Adonis (EPWP Participant) edited by Thozama Nzama, Picture by Hildegard Adonis

A former Expanded Public Works Programme participant says she always acknowledges the fact that the much needed skills she gained through the EPWP were a stepping stone to a permanent job that she has.

Mrs Hildegard Adonis from Gouda a village that is 37km south of Porterville in the Cape Winelands District Municipality in the Western Cape Province, says after completing Grade 12, she worked in factories and on farms. Determined not to remain jobless after the liquidation of a steering wheel factory she worked for, she began selling second-hand clothes, however she was soon without an income and ended up staying at her husband's home. She says she, her husband and her son eventually moved into a rented home in Gouda and she relied on her husband's income. Here, she explains her journey:

"Unemployed and directionless, I went to the Gouda Library and asked for volunteer work; the staff did not hesitate and received me with open arms. Andrid Pieters and Camille Lewis trained me in the basics and Gouda Library became like a second home for me. After volunteering for a year, I was offered an EPWP contract by the Drakenstein Library Services - under the mentorship of the Wellington Library.

They worked shifts, I could not say no because I knew my heart was in the right place and I had found my passion. At 4 o'clock in the morning I would stand up no matter the rain, darkness or wind to catch the 5:30 train, arriving at Wellington station at 6 o'clock and then the half hour walk to the library. When the shift is over I would walk and by the time I will get at the station the train would be gone, and for a week I hiked. The latest I ever got home, was 10 o'clock and not once did I complain. Through my determination and the hunger for my passion, I never gave up.

After my mentorship, Library Services offered me a job at Hermon Library. For 2 years, I was on an EPWP contract. My money was just for travelling expenses, not once did my husband say I must quit the job because he saw the passion in my eyes whenever I spoke about the community and the children. Every time a new post opened, I applied and got as far as two interviews but was unsuccessful both times. Because of that, it drove me to do better at my job. I felt my job description was so unimaginative and I expanded my services to creative classes, training for the youth and everything I saw that the community might need.

I was willing to help with everything, and some would say; "I will never break my back for EPWP-money" and I would always say; "where there is a will, there is a way." I received a Certificate of Excellence and that was a great achievement for me, because someone saw the work I was doing for the community. I received on the job training and in return used my skills to contribute towards the up-lifting of the community and to deliver excellent library services.

The 9th of September 2017 will be memorable for me, because on that day I signed my permanent contract with Drakenstein Municipality. Being on EPWP gave me hope and my dream of getting a permanent job to provide for my family came true. Thanks to Mrs. Lorensia Thomas and Drakenstein Municipality who believed in me.

The EPWP programme is a meaningful contributor to current household incomes of unemployed people, and especially the youth, women and people with disabilities. My motto is "If you have a passion for your work, you never have to work a day in your life". When things are not going as you want, you just have to keep trying and trying. Never let obstacles ruin your goals, let them serve as a motivator to you until you reach your goal."



GEFP

3 Divorce settlements no longer treated as debt

We have replaced the debt approach with the service reduction approach with effect from 1 August 2019.

Following the amendment to the GEP Law, 1996, the GEFP has changed its rules regarding divorce claims.

We have replaced the debt approach with the service reduction approach with effect from 1 August 2019.

Members who had their divorce settlements dealt with in terms of the debt approach and who were divorced prior to 1 August 2019, had until 22 May 2020 to exercise their choice should they wish to remain on the debt approach. Such members were sent communication to indicate their choice. More information is available on our website and from our call centre on 0800 117 669 or visit the nearest GEFP Offices.

Note:

The new service reduction model means that, rather than creating a debt against the member, there will be an adjustment to the member's pensionable service years following the payment of a divorce settlement by the GEFP. This means that the benefit that will be paid to the member when they exit the GEFP will now be decreased by reducing the members' years of pensionable service to take into account the pension amount that was paid to the spouse upon divorce.

EPWP PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

By Lesego Moretlwe

In South Africa, black Africans, women, youth and the unskilled are the most affected by the high unemployment rate faced by the country. Women are also the most vulnerable to the forces of the labour market, especially women of colour who mainly hold low-skilled jobs. This is confirmed by the Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 1: 2021, released by StatsSA, which found that the unemployment rate for females was 34.0% against 31.4% of males.

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is a government strategic intervention aimed to reduce poverty and provide income support through the creation of work opportunities for the poor and unemployed South Africans. The EPWP through its Infrastructure, Social, Environment & Culture, as well as Non-State sectors play a significant role in improving livelihoods among communities through the provision of work, training opportunities, income in exchange for work and assets and services delivered to poor and unemployed South Africans.

The EPWP is therefore committed to its mandate of providing work opportunities to the most vulnerable and rigorously engaging and intervening in strategies aimed at drawing a significant number of people into productive work and strengthening women participation in the implementation of EPWP projects in order to promote social protection and improve livelihoods," says the Acting Deputy Director General of the EPWP, Ms Carmen-Joy Abrahams.

In the current financial year 2021/22 for the period 1 April – 30 June 2021, EPWP implementing bodies, i.e. government and its social partners have implemented 4 674 projects across all the nine provinces creating 472 646 work opportunities. Of the work opportunities created by the programme, 73% was created for women.

This achievement is a contribution towards the 5 million work opportunities to be created through the EPWP by 2024. The participation target for women in the EPWP as one of the vulnerable groups has increased from 55% in the previous phase (EPWP Phase 3) to 60% in the current phase (EPWP Phase 4) of implementation of the Programme. This increase in the target is significant in order to address some of the economic inequalities that exists between men and women.

Participants' Testimonials

A participant in the EPWP, Ms Zanele Cosa, commended government for utilising the EPWP to provide economic opportunities to poor and unemployed women in her community of Emalahleni, in Mpumalanga. Ms Cosa, is one of the women currently being trained by the Mpumalanga Regional Office of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) and Emalahleni Local Municipality in road construction work. She encouraged women in the EPWP to use the Programme to acquire skills they can use to gain employment or set up small businesses after exiting the Programme.

For Ms Thembisile Msomi, being part of the EPWP's Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme has changed her life for better. "It is wonderful to see government providing women with skills to work in the construction sector," she said.

Ms Msomi is one of the learner contractors who recently received their statement of results after having participated in the Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme under the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (NDZ) Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal. She encouraged women in the EPWP to use the Programme as a platform to learn and to economically empower themselves.

Bulletin issued by
Communications & Marketing



EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME