

31 March 2022



EPWP Bi-Weekly Bulletin

issue 56



NEDLAC APPLAUDS THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE EPWP IN THE CREATION OF WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR POOR AND UNEMPLOYED SOUTH AFRICANS

Article and picture by Michael Mokoena

The National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) has applauded the role played by the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the creation of work opportunities for poor and unemployed South Africans and further applauded EPWP implementing bodies for delivering projects that contributed to the socio-economic upliftment of communities.

Speaking at the end of a two-day visit to EPWP projects in Rustenburg in the North West recently, the member of Nedlac Community Constituency, Mr. Lucas Qakaza said: "We appreciate the work done in communities by the EPWP. Communities we have visited expressed happiness with the EPWP projects...they want some of these projects to be replicated across the country".

His sentiments were echoed by both Mr. Fani Xaba and Mr. Siphon Ndhlovu who represented the Business Constituency and Labour Constituency respectively.

"During the visit to the EPWP projects, we have witnessed the good work done by ordinary South Africans in their communities. The visits have taught us a lot about the EPWP. As Nedlac Business Constituency we will have to identify ways we can leverage on some of these projects to contribute to the fight against poverty and unemployment," Mr. Xaba said.

The delegation said that it was also heart-warming to see the impact of the EPWP on the personal and career development of participants. "We wish to thank the participants for openly and frankly communicating their feelings and experiences of the EPWP with us. Interacting with participants gave us an understanding that while they appreciate the monthly stipend they were receiving from the

Programme, they were more interested in the career path offered by the Programme...their commitment is on utilising the EPWP to build their careers going forward," Mr. Ndhlovu explained.

In closing, the delegation urged the government to identify ambassadors for each EPWP project and "Let the participants tell the good story of the EPWP". The Nedlac delegation has also visited EPWP projects in Western Cape and Limpopo. The purpose of these project visits is to provide an opportunity to the Nedlac Social Partners to take lessons on the interventions being implemented in the Programme and to further enhance Nedlac Constituencies positions during the engagement on the EPWP policy.

The Deputy Director General of the EPWP Branch in the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI), Ms. Carmen-Joy Abrahams thanked the Nedlac delegation for visiting the projects and for contributing to the government's work of formulating the EPWP Policy. She also thanked all EPWP participants as well as the implementing bodies for driving the success of the Programme. She added that the Department will continue to work with all stakeholders to profile the good work done by EPWP participants across the country.

Participants' Testimonials

Ms. Phindile Matole, a participant in the Fire Reservist Force & Disaster project, welcomed the Nedlac visit. She explained that the project has assisted them a lot as the youth of Rustenburg. "The project has provided us with work experience needed to enter the formal job market. Because of the EPWP, we are today fully qualified firefighters who respond to all emergency cases within the community," she said. ■

DURBAN REGIONAL OFFICE CONCLUDES ITS FSCA TRAINING PERFORMANCE FOR THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR

By Sduduzo Simelane and Velile Jiyane

The Durban Regional Office of the National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (NDPWI) has trained over 1200 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants in basic financial literacy skills in partnership with the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA) during a marathon four week period that started on 21 February 2022 and concluded on 18 March 2022.

These participants are contracted to work on EPWP projects through the Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) as part of the EPWP Non-State Sector (NSS) component. The training consisted of two sessions per day and was facilitated by officials from the EPWP unit of the Durban Regional Office.

The FSCA training programme, as these workshops/ training initiatives are generally referred to, began in 2018 when the FSCA as the body charged with the regulation of financial service providers as well as ensuring fair treatment of financial service consumers, entered a partnership with the NDPWI to empower EPWP participants with basic financial literacy.

In terms of this partnership, officials from the NDPWI were trained as trainers to enable them to reach out to thousands of EPWP participants across the country. In KwaZulu-Natal this initiative has been gaining momentum ever since.

An adhoc Cluster Approval session held through EPWP Beneficiary Training Unit at Head Office approved training of 2142 EPWP Non-state sector participants for KwaZulu-Natal out of whom 1231 (57%) attended the workshops on Basic Financial Literacy Programme. Twenty one NPOs were identified and 43 training sessions conducted across 8 of the 11 districts of KwaZulu-Natal. According to the training

schedule, six NPOs and 10 sessions were lined up within the King Cetshwayo district; four NPOs (8 sessions) in the Ethekwini district; four NPOs (6 sessions) for Harry Gwala; three NPOs (6 sessions) within Ilembe district; and 1 NPO (2 sessions each) for Ugu, Umgungundlovu, Umzinyathi and Zululand districts.

On the face of it, the Durban Regional Office seems to have undertaken a rather ambitious task targeting so many participants so close to the end of the financial year. Not so for Mr Thabani Mazibuko, the EPWP Training Manager in the Region, who argues that "it is worth noting that we have been building our capacity to conduct FSCA training on this scale.

Seven of the members of staff in our unit have been trained as trainers, as is one official from the Real Estate Management Services unit of the Region. In addition, we have ensured that officials from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Public Works, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA) as well as Ethekwini Metro are also trained as trainers.

This has put us in a position of less reliance on support from outside the province which is fantastic because we (i) can control our diary; (ii) have given the province capacity to do it for itself and (ii) have alleviated much of possible language barrier" Mr Mazibuko concluded.

The training of participants in the NPO Programme ends the current financial on a high note of good performance of the KwaZulu-Natal province in imparting financial literacy skills to the EPWP participants during the 2021/22 financial year period. ■

Bulletin issued by
Communications & Marketing



EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME