



Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Social Sector Conference

The National Department of Public Works and the Department of Social Development co-hosted the 9th Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Social Sector conference from 4-8 March 2013 at Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre in Kimberley, Northern Cape.

The 5-day National EPWP Social Sector conference which was held under the theme "EPWP Social Sector United in Action towards Socio-Economic Freedom" aimed at the following:

- Evaluating progress made since the EPWP conference in 2012
- Deliberations on strategic issues, review legislative frameworks and five key priorities of government
- Expansion of work opportunities to the unemployed, particularly youth
- The conference will lay a foundation for EPWP Phase 3
- Align the outcome of the conference to National Development Plan (NDP).

During the Conference, the Deputy Minister of Social Development, Mrs Maria Bongi Ntuli, announced that the EPWP Social Sector has since April 2009 to December 2012 (phase 2) created 630 000 work opportunities to the poor unemployed South Africans. "While we have recorded notable progress in the first and second phase implementation of this Programme, we are conscious that success does not come by chance, but is the product of deliberate planning and commitment. And that is what makes this gathering so important," said Deputy Minister Ntuli during her keynote address.

The delegates also discussed the inclusion of people with disabilities in the Programme, with the view of addressing inequalities, poverty and unemployment within the communities. Currently the prevalence of disability in South Africa is estimated to be between 5-6% with sensory and mental disability being the highest.

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