

MEDIA STATEMENT

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES MAINSTREAMED INTO THE EPWP

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As part of its mandate to provide work opportunities to the unemployed and alleviate poverty within the South African communities, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) has embarked on a series of community information sharing sessions in all the provinces with an objective to mobilise for the increased inclusion and participation of People with Disabilities into the EPWP. The third session was held at Lejweleputswa District Municipality in Welkom, Free State.

The information sessions are spearheaded by the EPWP Non State Sector (NSS) which is one of the sectors of the EPWP. The NSS is an innovative approach developed by government to mobilise for the establishment of partnerships with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

The purpose of the partnerships is to offer NGOs a wage subsidy for the unemployed as a catalyst to increase the creation of work opportunities in communities.

Two programmes exist in the Non-State Sector, namely: the institutionally based which is referred to as the Non-State Sector NGO Programme managed by the Department of Public Works and the area based which is referred to as the Community Work Programme (CWP) and is institutionalised at the Department of Co-operative Governance.

According to Ms Kelebogile Sethibelo, EPWP Chief Director, Operations, all the four sectors of the EPWP, namely: Infrastructure sector, Non State Sector, Social Sector, Environment & Culture sector and the Social sector have the mandate to contribute significantly to the upliftment of communities through the provision of work opportunities and include People With Disabilities as well as youth and women in implementing the EPWP projects.

“The EPWP has noted the progress in terms of the participation of People with disabilities in the Programme, but would like to create awareness and open a platform to better understand the challenges of People with Disabilities taking part in the Programme”, concluded Sethibelo.

All the relevant stakeholders such as Municipalities, Disabled People of South Africa (DPSA), Independent Development Trust (IDT) and South African Social Services Agency (SASSA) also participated in the session to impart valuable information to People with disabilities.

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