



public works

Department:
Public Works
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Expanded Public Works Programme

EPWP Week and Sod Turning Ceremony

***Kudube Primary School, Temba in Hammanskraal
28 November 2013***

Remarks by: Minister TW Nxesi

Protocol and welcome

Thank you for inviting me to be a part of this important event – which officially launches “EPWP Week”. Further events are planned over the next week in Gauteng, Western Cape, Free State and Northern Cape.

I think it is important that when we do something right, then we must celebrate that success. The National EPWP Week will be held under the theme “**EPWP so many lives changed for the better**”. This initiative is an awareness campaign by the Department of Public Works (DPW) with the objective of heightening communication on the role of EPWP in changing the lives of poor and unemployed South Africans.

Combatting the Triple Challenge

In his 2012 State of the Nation Address, President 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 - 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 programmes and to optimise labour intensive methods.

With this in mind, last year, I asked the following question: *How do we radically expand the scope and content of the Expanded Public Works Programme?*

We 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.

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. They tell the story:

- Re-awakening the dignity that comes with work and the ability to contribute to household income.
- Acquiring skills and re-entering the job market, in some cases.
- Providing an opportunity to access education,
- And providing hope for a better future.

EPWP Phase 3

The planning for Phase 3 of the EPWP Programme – from 2014-2019 – has been finalised, based on the following approach:

- To up-scale numbers – to 7.5 million in 5 years - by focusing on areas which give the largest number of work opportunities.
- But more importantly, rather than just counting numbers, the emphasis will be on the quality of the EPWP outcomes in terms of:
 - Improved service for poor communities – such as home-based care, ECD, security, cleaning of cemeteries etc
 - Provision – and maintenance - of additional infrastructure such as roads, as well as
 - More innovative projects which concentrate on greening and sustaining the environment.

I am pleased to report that we had a very positive response from the Cabinet for the plans we presented. Crucially we have won support for labour intensive methodologies across the board – with ministers committed to developing appropriate projects.

Greening of Hammanskraal Projects

The Hammanskraal EPWP projects originated in 2010 during a meeting between the Hammanskraal Parliamentary Constituency Office and the EPWP Senior Management. The then Minister of Public Works, requested the EPWP to try and find ways to support the communities within Temba in Hammanskraal.

As a result the Department of Public Works (EPWP Branch) in collaboration with the City of Tshwane identified Environment and Culture Sector Projects that could stimulate the creation of work opportunities for poor and unemployed people in Hammanskraal.

The following projects were identified:

- Removal of alien vegetation
- Fencing of the Temba Dam area and
- Upgrading of Stinkwater Park

These projects will be completed during the 2013/14 financial year.

The Hammanskraal Project Steering Committee was formed to guide the project roll-out. The contractor has also appointed a Community Liaison Officer to promote community participation. Local councillors are also involved to ensure that there is local procurement and recruitment of local people.

FENCING OF THE TEMBA DAM

The main project activity is the erection of a game fence and security access gates covering a perimeter of 5,500 metres. This protects people and animals. In addition to fencing, the project will also install recreational facilities such as braai stands, concrete tables, chairs and bins – thus providing a picnic and recreational facility to the public.

The project will last from November 2011 to the end of March 2014. Provisionally, the number of beneficiaries for this project is 30.

UPGRADING OF STINKWATER PARK

The park is situated in the Stinkwater area which is about 20 kilometres away from the Temba Dam. The park covers about two hectares of land. The scope of the project covers earthworks; procurement and installation of an irrigation system; construction of walkways; planting of trees - 43 plants, 135 tree stakes; provision of park furniture and playground equipment; and shrubs and palisade fencing for 1,040 metres.

This project is planned to be completed by March 2014 with a total number of 23 beneficiaries.

REMOVAL OF ALIEN VEGETATION

The removal of alien vegetation project was completed in February 2013 – with 23 beneficiaries. However the problem is not yet resolved as alien vegetation is coming back again into Temba Dam.

Discussions are on-going with the City of Tshwane - to identify the source of alien vegetation – and which discussions will lead to a second phase of the project to remove alien vegetation.

The Big Picture Looking Forward:

EPWP will be delivering more than 4.5 million work opportunities in Phase 2 (2009-14); 7.5 million in Phase 3 (2014-19). This is delivery on a grand scale.

- This government has delivered. I firmly believe that South Africa is a much better place today than it was in 1994.

Since 1994:

- We have built a non-racial constitutional democracy, founded on a culture of human rights
- There are 6 million more permanent jobs now than there were in 1994.
- In 1994 only 50% of people had access to toilets. Today that figure is 84%.
- We have subsidised and built 3.3 million houses.
- In 1994 less than 5 million households had access to clean water. Today 13 million households have access – of which 7 million receive 6,000 litres free each month.
- We have built a universal free and compulsory education system - and extended schooling to include Grade R.
- We have doubled the number of university students and graduates, and
- We now feed 9 million school children daily.

Going forward, the government has announced:

- its intention to fast-track land reform, and
- has announced a Four Trillion Rand infrastructure roll-out to drive economic growth and job creation.
- One international measure of poverty is the number of people living on under 2 Dollars a day (R20 per day). In 1994 the figure was 20% of the population. Today it is around 3%. [*So we still have a way to go.*]

As we prepare for elections in 2014, I want to make the following points:

First, it is your right and duty to criticise government officials and representatives when we do not deliver. I would urge you to do this through the Ward committees.

I would be the first to admit that mistakes have been made. A large part of my job as Minister of Public Works is exactly to address these mistakes and to root out the tenderpreneurs and corrupt elements. The same process is happening in other departments.

Thirdly, let us never forget that it was the Alliance – led by the ANC – which after decades of struggle and sacrifice – brought down the cruel Apartheid regime.

Let me conclude on that note. I thank you.