



public works

Department:
Public Works
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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

**EPWP Workshop:
Plan for achieving the 2013-2014 targets for EPWP**

CGO Building, Pretoria, 1 February 2013

Opening Remarks:

TW Nxesi MP, Minister of Public Works

PROTOCOL

- DG
- DDG: EPWP (Stanley Henderson) and your team – with a particular welcome to the provincial coordinators
- Our honoured guests – from academia – and from other Departments and public entities
- Officials of DPW

Welcome colleagues. It is February 1st – so we no longer say “compliments of the season”.

It is however Football Friday. In fact the first official communication from our new DG to staff was to declare Football Friday and to invite DPW employees to wear their Football jerseys on Fridays for the duration of the AFCON Cup. If you are not wearing Bafana Bafana strip you will have to explain yourself to the DG.

Thank you all for coming. This is a very important gathering. You have important work to do.

We all know the background. International economic conditions are not favourable for economic growth and employment. We are facing consistently high unemployment rates. As government – at every level – we have to take action to mitigate the effects on our

people. The Expanded Public Works Programme is an important part of government's response – and we are under some pressure to accelerate delivery and to up-scale targets in relation to the creation of work opportunities.

You know these imperatives and many of you will have ideas on how to optimise our response as EPWP. Share those ideas with us.

I need to flag the following issues:

- We have two tasks today:
 - To finalise plans for accelerating the creation of work opportunities in 2013/14.
 - To begin a much broader debate on how we significantly up-scale in Phase III of EPWP (2014-2019)

- We need to interrogate the costings which have been provided:
 - Clearly the cost per work opportunity will influence the quantum of work opportunities that can be created.
 - We also need to ask how fast we can bring these new opportunities on stream – and the involvement of the NGO non-state sector appears to be crucial in this regard.

- We need to cast the net very wide now. We need new thinking in regard to job creation – particularly in relation to the green economy and social provision.
- Even as we focus on the need to expand the number of work opportunities – let us not lose sight of the qualitative aspects of the EPWP. Take some time to read the testimonials of some of the beneficiaries – and you will understand that EPWP is much more than a question of numbers. We are dealing with human beings. EPWP crucially brings with it dignity and opportunities to get back into education, training and the world of work.

So as we plan for an expanded EPWP let us keep in mind the following qualitative considerations:

- Community participation for community development
- Sustainability and development of the green economy
- Socially useful products – schools, roads etc
- Training and up-skilling – eg for the Social Sector programmes on Early Childhood Development and Home Based Health Care; in the infrastructure projects.

Feel free to share your criticisms. Let us know what are the problems and barriers to the further acceleration of the EPWP. Tell us how we can do better. I wish you well in your deliberations.