

Launch of EPWP and Developmental Projects and  
Public Works School Support Programme: Nqweba SSS

*Umasizakhe Sport Centre, Masizakhe Township,  
Graaff Reinet, Eastern Cape*

*25 April 2019*

Remarks:

TW Nxesi MP, Minister of Public Works

Protocol:

- Programme Director
- Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Dr Zweli Mkhize
- Mayor of Dr Beyers Naude Local Municipality, Cllr de Vos
- The Councillors including:
  - The Speaker, Cllr T Nonnies, and

- The Chief Whip, Cllr. A Booysen
- Senior Government Officials
- EPWP (and School Support Programme) Participants
- The School Principal and members of the SGB (School Governing Body)
- Members of Community

## **I. EPWP Programmes**

Welcome all and thank you for attending this important occasion to launch a number of EPWP (Extended Public Works Programme) and other projects designed to create work opportunities whilst providing much needed services to the community.

The idea for these projects came from the community itself – when I visited in September 2018. You had already in place functioning Non-Profit Organisations:

- the Masincedane Old Age Service Centre and
- the Nosango Veronica Sobukwe Old Age Service Centre – providing care and support to some 100 elderly people in the area.

Although these Centres received funding from the Eastern Cape Department of Social Development, most of the caregivers were working on a voluntary basis. It was with this in mind that we met with all stakeholders - the NPOs, the Church, the Department of Social Development and Public Works - to agree that funds could be accessed through the EPWP Social Sector Incentive Grant to support 29 EPWP participants for a two year period to train and practice as caregivers.

The beneficiaries of this employment training project were selected through an open and transparent process. 14 have already been placed – consisting 9 females and 5 males – and the other 15 will start work next year. We wish them well – and that this will lead to careers in social services. In the meantime, the care given to the elderly in the community is being enhanced and strengthened.

I should also mention a number of other projects already in existence in the area:

1. The Road Maintenance Project – being implemented by the Department of Transport – and which created 360 work and training opportunities – whilst improving the quality of access roads.
  
2. The Clean-up Project – implemented by the Dr Beyers Naude Municipality – providing 248 work opportunities.
  
3. The National Youth Service – a project implemented by the Department of Transport to provide electrical and plumbing training to 10 youths (4 men and 6 women).
  
4. The Community Work Programme – implemented by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs – which is creating 380 work opportunities.

The EPWP is a government-wide programme whose main objectives are:

- to provide work and training opportunities and income support to poor and unemployed South Africans

- through the labour-intensive delivery of public and community assets and services,
- thereby contributing to development.

So there are two sets of beneficiaries – those who participate in the programme, and communities who receive improved services and infrastructure.

In the years since 2004 when the EPWP began, government has created some 10 million work opportunities. Our target for Phase 4 of EPWP – which we are launching this month - is to create a further 5 million work and training opportunities between 2019 and 2024.

## **II. Public Works School Support Programme**

Finally, I also need to mention that Public Works has concluded a 3-year partnership with the Nqweba Senior Secondary School.

Let me explain. Ten years ago, research indicated a shortage of built environment professionals – such as engineers, architects etc. The reason for this was the high failure rates at university level, which in turn was due to poor maths and science education in the schools.

To respond to this problem the Department of Public Works established its Schools Support Programme in 2013. The Programme provides support to schools with the aim of creating a pool of learners to take up built environment qualifications at Institutions of Higher Learning.

The objectives of the Schools Programme are as follows:

- To enhance the learning of Maths and Science to achieve the quality results for university entrance in built environment qualifications;
- To create career awareness to learners dwelling in rural, township and informal settlements;

- To attract potential “professionals” into the built environment and
- To provide funding opportunities to learners who are interested in pursuing studies in the built environment qualifications.

In selecting which schools to support we set the following guidelines and criteria that had to be met:

- Well performing schools (with learner achievement of 60% and above in mathematics and physical science)
- Schools with a potential to expand the provision of high quality mathematics and physical science teaching and learning
- Schools from disadvantaged communities (rural, farm and township).
- Maths and Physical Science learners from Grade 10-12
- Commitment by all parties to participate in the Programme for a duration of three years.

Nqweba Secondary School will be adopted as part of the School Programme in 2019. Six (6) Grade 10 learners will be adopted to participate in the Schools Programme. The six learners will remain in the Programme until Grade 12 when they will be awarded bursaries to pursue built environment qualifications in the University upon successful completion of Grade 12.

The six learners will later join the Departmental Internship Programme and later the Young Professionals Programme and then enter into permanent employment once professionally registered with relevant professional bodies.

The school has listed the following as interventions to improve their performance:

- Extra classes - morning, afternoon, Saturdays, winter & spring classes
- Use of previous exam papers
- Class, controlled & oral tests
- Feedback to learners & parents, and

- Parents to be called in when learners are not doing their work.

So let me say to the learners, their families and the school: this is not an easy ride. You will have to work hard, support each other and put in the time and commitment.

But you will not be alone. You will be supported at every step by the professional team that runs the School and Bursary programmes;

- Life Skills coaching
- University Readiness Workshops for learners;
- Hosting of Winter school camps addressing content gaps and remedial work; and providing support for Maths and Science teaching and learning;
- Hosting of career expos;
- Job shadowing;
- Forming Science Clubs;

- Holding of Principals & SGB Forums; Workshops for School Management Teams and focusing on strategic planning
- Maths and Science Improvement workshops

A total number of 40 schools have participated in The Schools Programme since 2013. The Programme has thus far benefited all nine Provinces.

The Department commits itself through the Schools Programme to support the Nqweba Senior Secondary School for an improved performance in 2019.

As government we believe strongly that education is an investment in the future of our children, their communities, the economy and the nation as a whole. Let me leave you with the wise words of our own icon, Tata Madiba: *“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”*

Thank you.