

Opportunities for youth

Youth set to benefit through EPWP agenda targeting work opportunities and training

LESLEY TSHAMANO

YOUNG people across KZN are set to benefit through skills development and job opportunities as the provincial public works department's expanded public works programme (EPWP) plans to roll out its agenda.

EPWP director Xolani Xulu said that in this financial year, EPWP was targeting the creation of work opportunities for 6 020 youths and achieving a target of 1831 youth who would receive accredited training through the Construction Education and Training Authority (Ceta) and other training bodies.

"EPWP programmes such as youth environmental services, school maintenance, National Youth Service (NYS) and Izandla Ziyagezana will be key for KZN youth to unlock their potential."

"As beneficiaries, young people will receive theory and practical training through Ceta funded programmes. More than 500 will be provided with internships and apprenticeships, some will also get a chance to write trade tests. The Ceta funded programmes will also incorporate the individuals' experience through the recognition of prior learning," Xulu said.

He said 134 youths from the Ugu district municipality's uMdoni and Umzumbe local municipalities were targeted to benefit from EPWP projects.

"The youth will be identified from 18 wards, which are considered the most deprived in terms of assessments done through Operation Sukuma Sakhe war rooms.

"Recruitment will be conducted through Operation Sukuma Sakhe structures and the aim is to recruit young people to participate in a NYS-type intervention that will inculcate a sense of pride and belonging in them through training and service delivery within their communities.

"The participants will work on various labour intensive projects such as greening, vegetable gardening, tree-propagation and tree planting, com-



SERVICES: The EPWP plans to roll out its agenda to benefit young people across KZN. PICTURE: VIRTUALCONSULTING

munity development services and recycling."

Meanwhile, the department is set to roll out phase two of the school maintenance programme across 10 district municipalities jointly with department of education.

The aim of the programme is to address school-based community sustainability and development through basic technical maintenance of the school and repairs to school infrastructure such as door locks, painting, roof leakages, broken windows and the planting of indigenous and fruit trees.

Xulu said the programme would ensure the recruitment of 3000 beneficiaries across the province.

He said a further 150 pupils would receive training in plumbing through the artisan development learning pathway OFO Code 642601 qualification NQF 4 for a duration of 36 months as a pilot with effect from 2017 to 2019.

"The training will cover comprehensive plumbing, plumbing trade test preparation, solar plumbing (inspector), solar plumbing (installer) and a full plumbing qualification/apprenticeship."

In terms of the provincial performance targets for 2016-17, Xulu said EPWP created 180 821 work opportunities and 76 109 full-time employees.

"These numbers reflect performance by provincial departments and municipalities against nationally set targets of

167 432 work opportunities and 62 621 FTEs. These figures are in terms of the final populated numbers in the EPWP reporting system at the end of the financial year, across the reporting sector; namely, the environment and culture infrastructure and social sectors.

"EPWP performance figures for 2017-18 are reflecting progress as the programme has already created 9 020 work opportunities and 969 full-time equivalents at the beginning of June 2017.

"Sixty-eight public bodies will report on their respective performance on the EPWP reporting system during the 2017-18 financial year."

provinces@thenewage.co.za