

Ghana taking lessons from EPWP

The government of Ghana has deployed a team of senior officials and engineers to South Africa on a study tour to learn more about the construction of roads using the labour intensive method of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

The tour aims to increase the number of people employed in the construction of feeder roads in Ghana.

The Ghanaian delegation, which is led by the Deputy Director Planning in the Department of Feeder Roads, Dr Kwasi Osafo Ampadu, will on Friday conclude their five-day study visit to various EPWP projects in South Africa.

The delegation kicked off their study tour in the country with a meeting on Monday with the Deputy Director General (DDG) of the EPWP in the Department of Public Works, Stanley Henderson, to discuss the EPWP in detail.

“Ghana is undertaking labour based technology in the construction of our feeder roads in order to create more work opportunities for our people.

“In our research we realised that South Africa is advanced in the creation of work opportunities through the EPWP’s labour based construction method, hence we undertook this study tour,” Dr Osafo Ampadu said.

He explained that while in the country, they would like to visit EPWP projects to see how labour based technology is implemented.

“We are also interested in the knowledge and technology that you have developed in the implementation of your EPWP,” Dr Osafo Ampadu said.

He added that the meeting with DDG Henderson has given them new ideas on how to ramp-up their labour based technology, which is currently at its infancy.

“By the end of our study tour we hope to have learned as much as we can about the Programme. In fact whatever we learn we will replicate when we get to Ghana,” Dr Osafo Ampadu said.

Commenting on the study tour by the Ghanaian delegation, DDG Henderson said the visit was vital because it offered the government of South Africa an opportunity to share its experiences on the EPWP with other countries in the world.

“The study tour of the Ghanaian government ties in neatly with the EPWP’s focus on the construction and maintenance of low volume roads through labour intensive methods. Constructing and maintaining roads labour intensively creates much needed work opportunities for our people, especially the poor, unskilled and semi-skilled,” Henderson explained.

He said as the Ghanaian delegation tour the EPWP projects in various parts of the country, they will be exposed to different types of roads that are constructed using the EPWP’s labour intensive method.

On Tuesday, the delegates, together with EPWP officials visited one EPWP project in Soshanguve in Pretoria and today they will be visiting another project in Cape Town.

The delegates are also accompanied by the officials from the International Labour Organisation (ILO). They will also visit the Council for Science and Industrial Research (CSIR) and will on Friday conclude their visit with a debriefing meeting at the offices of the EPWP in Pretoria.

Expanded Public Works Programme

The EPWP is a government initiative aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment through the provision of training and short term to medium term labour intensive work opportunities to the poor and unemployed South Africans.

The EPWP Participants (beneficiaries) work in different projects like Early Childhood Development Centres, Home Community Based Care, Extra School Support Programmes, Working on fire, Working for Water, Roads Maintenance Projects, etc.

Through various skills and training that the participants receive from the Programme, they (participants) stand a better chance to enter a formal job market or become entrepreneurs. – SAnews.gov.za