

Public Works on Expanded Public Works Programme progress

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EPWP continues to contribute in the fight against poverty and unemployment

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) continues to contribute in the fight against poverty and unemployment in many communities in South Africa. In Viljoenskroon (Rammulotsi Township) in the Free State, the EPWP has provided a total 898 community members with work opportunities to contribute in the socioeconomic upliftment of their community.

“The EPWP projects have helped poor community members to feed themselves and their families. We have established community food gardens that are producing nutritious foods for us,” the Mr Petrus Mkhwanazi said.

Mr Mkhwanazi is one of the 898 EPWP participants who are employed on a temporary basis by the Regeneration of the Lost Generation Organisation (Rolgo) – a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) that is working with the government to roll-out some of the EPWP projects in Viljoenskroon.

“Today we are playing a central role in the socioeconomic development of our community by participating in a range of EPWP projects such as working with the local municipality (Moqhaka Local Municipality) to clean our community; working with the local schools to encourage young people to stay away from alcohol, drugs and other social ills; producing food (through food gardens) for poor families as well as for our local hospice. We also have started our own small brick manufacturing projects which produces affordable bricks for our local community,” another participant Ms Noni Modungwa said.

Ms Modungwa work in the Rolgo’s EPWP recycling project. “Our recycling project is important because it does not only contribute to a cleaner and sustainable community, but it also contributes in our economic lives. We sort out and sell the material that we have collected. This allows us to make money for ourselves so we can look after our loved ones,” Ms Modungwa added.

Some of the EPWP projects that Rolgo has undertaken include the provision of entrepreneurial skills to the local youth; facilitating the deepening of faith and cultural values as well as promoting peaceful co-existence in the communities through peaceful conflict resolution measures.

The NPO works with a range of stakeholders including the local municipality, faith based organisations, the Free State Department of Social Development and the Department of Public Works - through Independent Development Trust (IDT).

The Councillor for Ward 21 at the Moqhaka Local Municipality Mr Zenzile Magadlela stated that the EPWP has assisted the municipality to create work opportunities for

the poor. “With the majority of our population in this community being unemployed, the EPWP has assisted a lot in the provision of short-to medium term work opportunities for our people. Recently, some of the EPWP participants marched to the municipal offices to pay their municipal rates and taxes, and this has encouraged other residents to also pay their rates and taxes,” Councillor Magadlela explained.

The Director for Viljoenskroon Hospice Mr Chris Mokatsane said the EPWP has provided the hospice with the much needed caregivers. “The caregivers help in looking after patients who are taking chronic medication as well as the elderly. These EPWP caregivers also do home visits to assist patients and the elderly in the community,” Mr Mokatsane said.

The manager for Rolgo NPO Mr Sandile Sobayeni thanked the Department of Public Works in paying the monthly wages of the EPWP participants.

The Deputy Director-General for the EPWP in the Department of Public Works, Mr Stanley Henderson, expressed gratitude to the EPWP participants for leading the government’s work of fighting poverty, social ills and unemployment. “I commend the role that the participants continue to play in our collective work of creating a better life for all our people.”

Brief background of the EPWP

The EPWP is a government initiative that aims to reduce poverty and unemployment through the provision of short term to medium term work opportunities for the poor and unemployed South Africans. The EPWP creates work opportunities in four sectors, namely, Infrastructure, Non-State, Environment & Culture and Social sectors. The EPWP Participants (beneficiaries) work in different projects like Community Work Programme (CWP), Early Childhood Development Programmes, Home Community Based Care Programmes, 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 EPWP, they (participants) stand a better chance to enter the formal job market and/or become entrepreneurs.

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