

Council workshop on EPWP

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Public Works held an Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) workshop for all councillors in the iLembe District Family of Municipalities on Wednesday, 20 February to address the misconception and misunderstanding around the programme.

EPWP is a government initiative aimed at poverty alleviation by providing income relief through short term to medium term work opportunities to the poor and unemployed focusing on skills development for women, youth, people with disabilities and adult men.

The workshop was held at the KwaDukuza Town Hall and was attended by officials

and councillors from the District Municipality and its four local municipalities including mayors, deputy mayors, speakers, whips, municipal managers etc.

According to provincial EPWP coordinator Xolani Xulu, the Department of Public Works in the province has seen displeasing incidents in the implementation of this programme.

"We have had to intervene in cases where councillors were demanding half of the wages of people and in some municipalities the Auditor-General has unearthed ghost workers where

wages are paid to dead bodies really. Government has lost millions because of this," he said.

Opening the workshop, His Worship the Mayor of iLembe District Municipality Cllr Siduduzo Gumede congratulated Mandeni Local Municipality for winning the Best Performing Municipality in the Implementation of EPWP award at the Kamoso Awards held in October last year.

"This programme is

helping reduce the negative effects of unemployment, which include social isolation, erosion of self-esteem, drug and alcohol abuse," said the District Mayor.

Presenting the overview of the EPWP programme, district performance and EPWP grant report, Mrs Nokwanda Dube from KZN DPW said the programme was struggling to meet its target of 2% people with disability.

"Phase 3 of this programme which started in 2014 and will conclude next month set a target of 2% work opportunities for the disabled and we are struggling. It seems that we are not creating activities conducive for people with disabilities," she said.

Other presentations were on the programmes recruitment and selection strategy as well as the progress with EPWP Phase 4 conceptualisation.

Dr Simphiwe Ndlovu from

the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs said one did not need a senior certificate to be part of EPWP.

"This programme is not for friends of councillors or friends of officials but for the disadvantaged. All you need is a South African identity document and to be part of the targeted groups as eluded to earlier. You don't even need to be able to speak English," he said.



IDM: iLembe District Family of Municipalities Councillors and KwaZulu-Natal Department of Public Works held an Expanded Public Works workshop