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MEC NKOSI VOWS TO HELP SEWING PROJECT GRADUATES GET WORK

KHETHUKUTHULA XULU

The KZN MEC for Public Works, Siphon Nkosi, says he will make it his mission that 93 sewing project graduates are funded and contracted by the government.

The MEC handed over certificates to participants from 10 district municipalities that have been successfully trained under the inaugural Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) sewing training project, at a showcase event in Durban yesterday.

Nkosi said he plans to engage with the MEC for Economic Development, Sboniso Duma, to help the graduates create and fund co-operatives to start supplying the government with materials like hospital bedding and curtains, government uniforms and protective gear.

The Public Works Department said the success of this programme could help government and the private sector save billions of rands by procuring locally-manufactured

personal protective equipment at a reasonable cost, instead of sourcing it abroad.

"The inception of the initiative is also another critical milestone in the Brics list of commitments, which seeks to explore and boost trade among member states in the textile sector in future," said spokesperson Mlungisi Khumalo.

One of the beneficiaries of the sewing project, Gugu Khumalo (34) from the uThukela region, said this programme has given them an opportunity to gain work experience and learn a new skill.

Khumalo said there have been many textile factories in the uThukela region that have recently opened and they require people with sewing skills and experience.

"This project has helped me grow my love for sewing, I had a fear of using the sewing machine because I was not familiar with using it, but now I have the confidence to use [one]," she said.

