



EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME PHASE 2 SUMMIT
OPENING ADDRESS
MINISTER GEOFF DOIDGE, MP

Programme Director

Deputy Minister of Public Works Mrs Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu

MECs present

eThekweni Metro Deputy Mayor Cllr Logi Naidoo

Chair of the Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Mr Godfrey Olifant

Chair of the Standing Committee on Appropriations, Mr Elliot Sogoni

Members of Parliament Present

Director General of Public Works Mr Siviwe Dongwana

Councillors

Agrément SA CEO, Mr Joe Odhiambo

CIDB CEO, Mr Ronnie Khoza

CBE CEO, Mr Bheki Zulu

CETA, Chairperson Mr Frank Fredericks

Deputy Director General EPWP, Mr Stanley Henderson

Deputy Director General Special Projects, Mr Mandla Mabuza

Senior Management in the Department of Public Works

Management of our public entities

Officials in the National Department of Public Works

Members of the media

Invited guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning

Today we are observing a significant occasion in the milestone of the Expanded Public Works Programme, where we are hosting the all important EPWP Summit with all 283 municipalities in the country.

It is our intention that this summit be recognised as a qualitative intervention in the socio-economic lives of our people.

As we gather here this morning, we are observing and recognising chapter three of our constitution, which encourages cooperative governance. And indeed, there is no better way to put in practise the formidable cooperative governance commitment between our national, provincial and local spheres of government than the historic summit you are part of today.

We are equally humbled by municipalities heeding the call to attend and engage with the National Government on charting a way forward for collaboration and strategic partnerships in the successful implementation of the Expanded Public Works Programme. This summit is a vital pilgrimage of EPWP implementers, evidenced by your attendance in numbers and the recognition of our partnership in this movement towards societal upliftment. This is a moment where all the three spheres of government work together through their existing budgets and mandates to ensure a successful implementation of EPWP.

Ladies and gentlemen, the key purpose of this historic Summit is to ensure that municipalities are able to contribute to the EPWP Phase two targets. The timing of the Summit is critical given that we are currently in the first year of the EPWP targets, up to the period 2014. This therefore provides us with ample time to work together towards realising the set targets by 2014.

Equally so, this summit comes shortly after municipalities signed delivery agreements with the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The agreements, signed by leaders of all three spheres of government, are expected to ensure an accountable and efficient local government system. I

can assure you that EPWP can and does play a vital role in ensuring that municipalities achieve their undertaking as signed in the delivery agreements.

A significant aspect of these delivery agreements speaks to the successful implementation of the Community Works Programme, which is directly intertwined with EPWP in its nature and customised design. The signing of the Delivery Agreement for Outcome 9 which is “A responsive, accountable, effective and efficient Local Government System” further boosts our effort of ensuring that we work closely with municipalities to do more for our communities.

Programme Director, this summit takes merely three months after our country’s successful hosting of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup, which for all intents and purposes, was hosted by municipalities. The host cities outdid themselves in hosting the most watched and technologically advanced World Cup of all time. This resounding success of the World Cup, particularly the performance of our municipalities, is one of the critical examples of best practice in our municipalities.

As national government, we acknowledge the critical role played by the local sphere of government, hence the decision to bring you fully on board in the implementation of EPWP, as a catalyst for social change. The successful hosting of the Soccer World Cup was the much needed foretaste of good things to come out of our strategic cooperation stretching through all the three spheres of government.

The EPWP is a crucial policy priority of our government in reducing poverty and unemployment, and while the National Department of Public Works is tasked with the enormous responsibility of coordinating the programme, the success of this programme depends largely on the unwavering and concerted effort of cooperation in implementation across national, provincial and local spheres of our government.

Allow me to remind you all that the EPWP, aims to create 4,5 million work opportunities by 2014, and municipalities are thus expected to contribute twenty seven percent of the work opportunities created to this overall EPWP target.

Ladies and gentlemen, the experiences we have drawn from implementing this programme, encourages us to make this clarion call to all of you in your strategic positioning in our communities.

With this summit we aim to:

- Intensify service delivery through labour intensive models of the EPWP Phase 2;

- Achieve 100% participation in the EPWP and reporting by all municipalities;
- Ensure that all municipalities, especially those in rural areas are able to access the incentive grant;
- Explore ways of improving the overall participation of all Rural Municipalities in the Community Works Programmes;
- Ensure that the full potential of the Non State Sector is optimally achieved through the participation of Community Based Organisations , Faith Based Organisations and Non Governmental Organisations;
- Achieve and increased understanding of EPWP across all 4 sectors of the Programme, which includes Infrastructure, Social, Non-State, and Environment and Culture as well as possibilities for Enterprise Development;
- Provide municipalities with critical information, content and contact information;
- Sign commitment agreements with Mayors; and
- Agree on institutional arrangements.

With these aims, our government is persistent in its call for all of us to work together to do more for our people. These aims, further mobilize the capacity of our municipalities, to create more work opportunities and speed up service delivery in our communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we were further encouraged to host this summit because the EPWP, continues to prove its viability as a vital catalyst for creation of decent work opportunities, with the release of improved first quarter results for the 2010/11 financial year.

I am pleased to announce this morning, that, the EPWP created 193,001 work opportunities in the first quarter (01 April 2010 to 30 June 2010) of the 2010/11 financial year. This figure reflects an impressive 30 percent achievement against the set annual target of 642 000 net-work opportunities in the 2010/11 financial year.

In terms of EPWP first quarter 2010/11 financial year, municipalities contributed 52, 911 work opportunities, which equates to 29% of the first quarter figures. In terms of the first quarter figures of this financial year, of the fifty two district

municipalities, only thirty which translates to 57% reported and of the 231 local municipalities only forty three which is 18% reported to EPWP.

This sample picture is a cause for concern and I believe that the technocrats from my department will over the next three days, further engage you on the details of this information I shared with you, and more importantly elaborate on the different approaches that municipalities can adopt to fast-track the implementation of EPWP in their communities.

It is important to note that, there are still three more quarters to go to achieve 642 000 net-work opportunities, therefore with the 193 001 net-work opportunities created in the first quarter; the EPWP has already achieved 30 percent of the annual target for the 2010/11 financial year.

The sector breakdown of work opportunities created under the EPWP in the first quarter of the 2010/11 financial year is as follows:

Infrastructure Sector	120,780
Environment and Culture Sector	30,919
Social Sector	13,439
Non-State Sector	4,777
Community Works programme	23,086
Total:	193,001

This achievement proves yet again that the programme is making a significant impact in helping government's concerted efforts of reducing unemployment and poverty by 2014.

Programme Director, the Infrastructure sector continues to achieve the highest percentage of work opportunities created against the targets, whereas the Social and Environment sectors respectively created the longest work opportunities.

This summit's host province KwaZulu Natal, has the highest work opportunities created in total with the bulk of the figures under the Infrastructure Sector. KwaZulu Natal is followed by the Eastern Cape and Gauteng who have all exceeded their first quarter employment creation targets.

However, the figures reflect that more work still needs to be done in the Northern Cape, Limpopo, North West and Mpumalanga.

While noting the challenges, EPWP is proving to be successful in creating employment opportunities for our people; hence we are gathered here today to engage with all municipalities to place EPWP at the nerve centre of creating work opportunities in order to fight poverty and unemployment.

This massive improvement and excellence in the implementation of EPWP, is a reliable source of confidence that the programme will easily exceed the set target of 642 000 work opportunities in the 2010/11 financial year and in doing so, help the programme to achieve its set five year target of 4,5 million work opportunities by 2014.

Ladies and Gentlemen, while we can celebrate our achievements thus far, we need you to put the shoulder to the wheel of service delivery for us to further succeed, not only as a department but as government overall.

Moving forward, EPWP recognizes the vital fact that for a developing country that is attempting to grapple with its high levels of structural unemployment and associated poverty, this public works programme will continue to be relevant to ensure that work can be created for the most disadvantaged in society. This is a necessary intervention of the government to address poverty, contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and mitigate the structural impediments to job creation.

The ANC led government cares about our people, and this summit should serve as a persistent reminder that indeed we are committed to uprooting our communities from the depths of poverty, to earn an income while doing productive work to aid in service delivery.

I am confident that our municipalities can surely play a critical role in drawing this significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work particularly because of your strategic positioning at the coalface of service delivery.

Ladies and Gentlemen, municipalities have a significant role to play in the creation of the targeted work opportunities. As we have seen in other areas including some of the EPWP projects we visited earlier this year, this can be achieved. The need for your unwavering commitment to helping national government in the fight against poverty and unemployment has reached a level unheard of before.

We urge you to drag every sinew of your institutional make-up to implement EPWP as a viable and constructive way of socio-economic upliftment. Let us position EPWP as the nerve centre of service delivery in our municipalities to ensure that this noble programme resonates in tandem with the developmental agenda of our government.

As I said during my budget vote earlier this year, participating in the EPWP is not only about number crunching, but remains essentially a commitment to promote a human-rights-oriented public service delivery culture, characterised, amongst others, by caring for the elderly and sick, educating pre-school children, rehabilitating and cleaning up our environment, as well as upgrading and

maintaining crucial infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water and sanitation through the labour intensive or labour absorbing service

Thus, the accelerated EPWP targets in the electoral mandate period of 2009 to 2014 are part of government's concerted responses to our structural unemployment situation and aims to provide work opportunities as a safety net to those out of work.

Hence the introduction of the Non-State sector in May this year, with its unique custom design. The Non State Sector Programme will mobilize Non Governmental Organisations, Community Based Organisations, Faith Based Organisations and communities directly in employment creation efforts through funding of the wage component of their activities.

The programme will encourage the EPWP to mobilize additional capacity outside the government to contribute to employment creation. It is our view that the private sector can also play a significant role in the implementation of EPWP through the Non-State sector and in return see the beneficiaries rewarded through the incentive grant.

The Independent Development Trust has been entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the implementation of the programme. The IDT is expected to recruit and appoint NPO's, FBO's and CBO's, that will initiate support programmes to create employment and provide income for a number of people in ways that build public and community goods and services.

I would like to call on other Public Works entities to engage with IDT and EPWP on ways in which we can jointly maximise our efforts in employment creation and facing up to our socio-economic challenges.

Programme Director, through this summit, we challenge municipalities to raise the bar in innovation and creativity to encourage implementation of projects that employ large numbers of the unemployed, and provide much needed goods and services to local communities.

This summit further recognises the vital fact that, the basic thrust of our government is to improve the general socio-economic conditions of our people. As a result, the effective implementation of the EPWP is at the core centre of this national undertaking by our government. The growth of EPWP is therefore highlighted, as one of the most important forms of unemployment insurance and social protection.

With this important national programme, our democratic government prioritises the protection of the poor, as an enduring principle we should not deviate from. The performance of municipalities in implementing EPWP therefore, serves as

an important barometer of our overall progress in reducing poverty and unemployment.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are still on course with a people's contract to create decent work and fight poverty.

Answering the challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality means that we must simultaneously accelerate economic growth and transform the quality of that growth. Our most effective weapon in the campaign against poverty is the creation of decent work, and creating work requires faster economic growth.

Moreover, the challenges of poverty and inequality require that accelerated growth take place in the context of an effective strategy of redistribution, which builds a new and more equitable growth path. This challenge is best addressed through a concerted effort by government in all spheres to work together and to integrate as far as possible their actions in the provision of services, the alleviation of poverty and the development of the people and the country.

The ANC's 2007 Polokwane Conference further resolved to directly absorb the unemployed through:

- Labour intensive production methods and procurement policies.
- A significant expansion of the public works programmes linked to the expansion of economic infrastructure and meeting social needs with home-based care and early childhood development on a massive scale.
- A much larger national youth service and ensuring the linkage of industrial strategy with key youth development programmes in the form of an integrated Youth Development Strategy.
- Introduce more programmes that target the employment of women.

The moment we are marking here today is the continuation of our concerted efforts to respond positively to these milestone resolutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen, EPWP should be enthusiastically adopted as a valuable commodity of social change by our communities. We should all make our important contribution to the pledge of a people's contract that binds all of us to half unemployment and poverty.

It is equally important that all government departments, provinces and municipalities identify projects and programmes with work opportunities for our people. The Department of Public Works will help you to implement your identified projects and encourage you to do more of such projects.

We call on all municipalities to come up with ingenious proposals to diversify the nature of the EPWP and further expand on the core mandate of creating labour

intensive work opportunities. This programme is a creative strategy of creating employment and thus calls for more thinking outside the box to create work for our people. Indeed, this is your unique opportunity to use EPWP as a strategic innovation hub of employment creation.

We are confident that this programme will continue to boost employment because we are in an advantageous position of having all the systems for delivery in place.

Government is looking forward to continuously reshaping and improving EPWP to stay relevant and broaden its impact in job creation and fighting poverty.

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, I urge you to take ownership of the EPWP. It is your programme with the sole aim of ridding you off the yoke of unemployment and poverty. Take this programme wherever you go even to the most obscure corners of this country. Government offers its full support to your unwavering efforts to implement EPWP. Let us all pursue the important principle of working together to do more.

It is also to the credit of beneficiaries of the EPWP that we always manage to outdo ourselves in our efforts to create employment. The hard work of beneficiaries of EPWP sets the programme as an appropriate example of best practice in second economy intervention of a developmental state. The cumulative work opportunities created in the first quarter of the 2010/2011 financial year as alluded to earlier confidently sends an unequivocal message that we are succeeding in implementing this important national programme. These figures further epitomises the recognition and reward for people and institutions that implemented the EPWP with excellence.

Our government continues to draw its strength from the enthusiastic participation of beneficiaries in poverty alleviation programmes like the EPWP to succeed and realise their true potential.

Particularly because EPWP is not taking place in a vacuum but forms a critical part of our nationwide people-centred programmes aimed at drawing significant numbers of the unemployed into productive employment.

We want all our municipalities to be part of these overwhelming achievements.

Even the most fervent of sceptics agree that the future potential for job creation resides largely in the EPWP. Therefore the expansion of a public works programme remains critical to deliver the much needed welfare gains we wish for.

Programme Director, with this summit we are sending an unequivocal message to our communities:

- We the undersigned elected representatives of the people pledge to use the resources of the state to address social and infrastructure backlogs throughout South Africa.
- We further commit that in this process we will create local work opportunities for unemployed members of communities in the areas where these projects are implemented.
- We endorse the target of creating 4.5 million work opportunities by 2014 and will ensure that the individual municipalities, provinces, national departments and public entities that we lead will exceed their targets and contribute to the national goal of halving unemployment by 2014.

Before I conclude, It is equally vital to appreciate the good work done by the national team of dedicated professional workers at the National Department of Public works and other supporting departments in making EPWP a successful fight-back against poverty and unemployment.

I thank you