

Minister of Public Works
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Public Works and Infrastructural Development: A Tool To Address Poverty

INTRODUCTION

The CBPWP is a specific job creation and poverty relief programme of government, targeted primarily at the rural poor. Its objectives, among others, include the following:

- Creating short term employment opportunities for community members by means of construction of public assets;
- Creating sustainable employment opportunities by facilitating micro business opportunities associated with the community assets created;

The CBPWP targets the following groups:

- Local labour: at least 30% of the project budgets are to be spent on local labour;
- Women: at least 50% of the people employed should be women;
- Youth: at least 15% of the people employed should be youth; and
- Disabled: at least 1,5% of the people employed should be those with disabilities.

CBPWP GENERAL APPROACH

Since its inception in 1994/95, the CBPWP has from time to time undergone improvement and, by now, three phases of its evolution can be identified, namely:

(i) Pilot project phase: 1994 - 1996

A grant of R250 million was allocated from the RDP fund to finance the CBPWP until the end of the 1996 fiscal year. The majority of the funds were allocated to 'pilot projects'. The issue being piloted was the extent to which a labour based approach could be adopted in the construction of medium-scale infrastructure projects using 'mainstream' technical consultants and contractors alongside a labour force recruited locally, and with the participation of communities in which the construction took place.

The provincial departments of public works operated, during the pilot project phase, as programme implementation agents (PIAs). There was also an involvement of IDT (R70 million; Siyakha (R12 million) and the Eastern Cape School Building Trust (R4 million). The rationale behind IDT's large share was that the IDT was already implementing the schools and clinic projects around the country through the Community Employment Programme (CEP).

(ii) Realigned CBPWP phase: 1996 - mid 1999

In 1996, the Department commissioned an evaluation of the CBPWP through the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The evaluation outcomes highlighted a need to realign the strategic direction of the programme in terms of focus, institutional arrangements and socio-economic sustainability of the intervention. These issues were dealt with by a Pre-Implementing Task Team (PITT) of the CPBWP, set up with a view to planning for the implementation of future programmes.

The PITT process resulted in the revision of the Programme Management System (PMS) in order to incorporate the recommendations of the evaluation into the future CBPWP. In summary, it can be said that the following items were the direct outcome of the evaluation and PITT processes:

1) Targeting: The recommendation was that focus must be on rural women and the youth. A balance between poverty pockets and local economic development nodes was also recommended.

2) Clustering: In order to maximise the impact of the projects implemented it was recommended that a clustering approach be adopted which would link together a number of projects in a way that they will reinforce one another. Clustering would also ensure sustainability of projects.

3) Programme Implementation and monitoring: It was recommended that the District/Regional Councils assume the role of Programme implementing agencies (PIA's) with the provincial Departments of Public Works acting as independent monitors for the programme. Provincial Public Works would also perform the role of provincial co-ordination.

4) Categorising the project types: Five categories were identified, namely, productive assets (e.g. community gardens); access to trade (e.g. access roads); social cohesion (e.g. multipurpose halls); labour saving (e.g. creches) and environment protection (donga protection).

The realigned CBPWP phase put local government at the centre of implementation. District Municipalities as local government structures in the rural areas manage the implementation of CBPWP throughout the areas of jurisdiction. The following are key functions performed by the District Municipalities in managing the CBPWP implementation:

- overall programme management
- managing of community training
- identification and employment of local contractors and communities
- proper planning for project sustainability
- maintenance and operation of certain community assets

The national Department of Public Works provides budget that covers two areas, namely, project funding and support services funding

CBPWP RELATIONS WITH PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The realignment of the CBPWP in 1997-1998 changed the role previously played by PWD offices in the CBPWP. Provincial Offices had until then been used as implementing agents for the CBPWP. This role was then taken over by local government structures, that is, the District Municipalities.

In terms of the Programme Management System (PMS), the role played by the Provincial Public Works after realignment became the following:

- provincial co-ordination
- independent monitoring

Provincial Coordination means that the PWD preside over the monthly meetings of the Provincial Co-ordinating Committee (PCC). The PCC is a structure consisting of the various line departments in the provinces and is responsible for project approval and progress monitoring.

Progress has been made with regards to co-ordination with all the PCC now being chaired by the PWD.

In terms of independent monitoring, formal contracts are signed with Provincial Public Works where the programme is being implemented. The PWD visit the sites and report to PCC. A written report is then sent to the Director: CBPWP Policy, Monitoring and Evaluation at Head Office. The PWD are part and parcel of the conducting of spot checks by the sub-directorate: monitoring and evaluation.

MONITORING OF CBPWP

In the early days of the CBPWP, monitoring used to be of a summative nature. This was done in order to give the programme managers crucial information around the implementation processes. This monitoring led to the development of a targeting formula to allocate funds to those district Municipalities where poverty is the most pressing, the clustering concept as opposed to stand alone projects (for more sustainability) and the development of an integrated monitoring system for proper project management with a strong evaluation leg.

Today evaluation captures the impact of the programme on beneficiaries as well as key process aspects such

as training. Two very important instruments have been developed in this process that can be replicated by other similar programmes. The first is a standardised quality of life measurement instrument and the second is a success and failure indicator measurement instrument. The programme management is now in a position to measure whether the beneficiaries (those who worked and did not work on the projects) within a 10 km radius of the projects have had an increased or decreased quality of life experience. This information consists not only of technical information but also the beneficiaries' perception of their success or failure. This information is gathered on an annual basis and the Department of Public works is one of the very few government institutions with long term impact data. With this information the Department can further "fine tune" the programme.

The CBPWP has also developed a very practical implementation monitoring system called the Monitoring Management and Information System (MMIS). This system has been developed over the last two years and contains all the key performance indicators for successful implementation. The four main areas are the budget, expenditure, social information, progress indicators and problem areas. The system is a computer based system and developments are underway to upgrade the original excel database system to a full blown online web based system. According to the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in the Presidency, the CBPWP is one of only two programmes with a successful monitoring system.

Co-operation with the National Spatial Information Framework (NSIF) section of the Department of Land Affairs has resulted in a pilot project that enables departments to view planning data from other key stakeholders. This is called the inter-departmental project viewer. Through negotiations with other Departments and stakeholders this project grew into a much larger project that is now being championed by the ISRDS office in the Department of Provincial and Local Government. Information on project management such as project progress, location and social information will be available in the next 6 months on a geographical information system to be viewed visually with other information such as census data, other poverty programmes data, hospitals, schools, ISRDS projects etc. This means that the programme will have a visual planning tool at virtually no cost to the Department through co-ordination and integration.

(iii) Realigned CBPWP and new dimensions phase: mid 1999 to present

This phase refers to the development by the CBPWP of a capacity to respond to specific imperatives and to forge partnerships and co-ordination with certain stakeholders in order to make a maximum impact on the lives of the poor. The CBPWP is one of the vital cogs of the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS). Aside from the fact that the CBPWP has been implemented in 11 of the 13 ISRDS nodal points for, at least, the last three years, a number of special projects have been implemented in partnership with other departments in the spirit of what the ISRDS is promoting. These projects are discussed below.

Community Production Centres

First introduced in 1999, which currently have an agricultural bias, the CPCs were established with a view to promoting production activities for the market. They promote community and emerging farmer participation and ownership with contracted support where necessary from the public and private sectors. The basis for success of the CPC approach lies in the effective co-ordination, partnership and the blending of the respective policies and strategies by the relevant government, private and community role-players. The Departments of Agriculture, Land Affairs and Water Affairs are some of the key stakeholders for this concept. An amount in the region of R28 million has been allocated for this initiative in 2001/2002. We are looking at how CPC's other than those with an agricultural bias could be established

Multi Purpose Centre

Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) are designed to provide "one stop" service centres within rural areas for government service to communities. These are well located with appropriate facilities and occupied by key service providers, in order to provide a quality one stop administrative service to rural communities.

When these centres are fully operational, it is envisaged that the following key departments and parastatals will be accommodated:

- Local Government
- Welfare and Pension
- Health
- Education

- Postal Services
- Telkom
- Eskom

The Department of Public Works through the CBPWP has made an allocation of 25 million and in the both 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 financial years towards the establishment of Multi-Purpose Centres in the Eastern Cape, Northern Province and KwaZulu Natal.

Youth Working Towards Environmental Accessibility

Implemented in 2000/2001 as a partnership with the National Youth Commission and the Office on the Status of Disabled Persons, this project was a success beyond expectations. It has met the following objectives:

- Make public properties and buildings accessible to the disabled
- Provide necessary training for construction of facilities referred to above to for youth, women and the disabled and any other participant.
- Maximise utilisation of the youth, women and disabled labour
- Achieve socio-economic development and empowerment through training, appointment of service providers and provision of sustainable facilities.

Public Works has R5 million for the continuation of the project this year.

HIV/AIDS Infrastructure Support Programme

This is new project aimed at creating infrastructure development which will be beneficial to rural communities to offset the devastation caused by HIV/AIDS. For example, local clinics which are in dire need of repair will be upgraded. Public Works is co-operating with the Department of Health and the Department of Welfare, a sum of R10 million has been made available.

KZN Cholera Infrastructure Response Programme

A partnership with the KwaZulu Natal Department of Health to respond to the outbreak of cholera in the Nongoma/Mahlabathini District of KwaZulu Natal. The project will involve the building of toilets and the protection of springs and has been funded to the tune of R3 million.

ACHIEVEMENTS

(i) Job Creation

To date (since 1998), the CBPWP has created close to 76 000 temporary employment opportunities with at least 42% of these jobs being filled by women and 43% being filled by youth (see the table below). Over 6300 sustainable jobs have been created with the directly productive assets created.

(ii) Sustainability Planning

Sustainability planning on all projects has been built into the planning process and no projects are approved for implementation without an adequate sustainability plan which addresses the issues of ownership, maintenance, management and usage of the asset.

(iii) Integration of Development and clustering of Projects

The identification of project clusters is carried out through a development planning process which assists in the identification of economic development nodes within the targeted areas.

Experience has demonstrated that significant impact and long-term benefits are achieved through the clustering of a range of projects as the basis for generating production, trade and the self-sustainability of poor communities.

The node identified is generally at a central place where communities converge to participate in a number of activities, e.g. a market place. The development of new and existing nodes aims to promote social cohesion and to minimize crime and violence, which often emanate from the struggle for scarce resources.

(iv) Training Strategy for Communities and Emerging Contractors

In order to ensure the sustainability of assets, the training of the people involved in both creating the assets, as well as those responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of the asset is crucial. For this reason a specific training framework for the programme has been developed and is included in the PMS (Programme Management System). It outlines what the focus of training is, the types of training required, who should be trained, what training should be carried out, who should carry out the training, when it should occur and how it should be funded.

(v) Rapid Reaction to Specific Needs/Repair of Storm Damaged Projects

Following the extreme flooding experienced in January 2000 in which severe damage was caused to infrastructure both in South Africa and neighbouring states, the CBPWP was able to rapidly intervene with appropriate measures to reinstate damaged infrastructure and also to create work for those who had lost land and crops in the process. Projects included a major road bridge in Mpumalanga, storm damaged roads in Northern Province and tornado damaged schools in Eastern Cape as well as the Land Rehabilitation programme which was implemented in the worst hit areas.

CBPWP ALLOCATIONS TO PROVINCES: 1998-2001

a. 1998/99 Year of Implementation

Funding totalling R274m was made available mid-way through the financial year for the 1998/99 Year of implementation. In line with the cabinet decision to target the 3 most poverty stricken provinces, namely KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Northern Province, this budget was allocated to district councils in these provinces resulting in the following investment in provinces:

Province	No. of District Councils	Total Budget
KwaZulu Natal	3 District Councils	R 91.9 m
Eastern Cape	4 District Councils	R 88.8 m
Northern Province	1 District Council	R 66.0 m

Funds were committed to projects by the end of the financial year (31/3/1999) and implementation started in April 1999. All funds were completely expended by 31 March 2001.

b. 1999/2000 Year of Implementation

Funding totalling R377m was confirmed in July 1999 for the 1999/00 Year of implementation. This was made up of R274m for Poverty Relief projects and R103m was allocated for access roads within the Wildcoast and Lubombo SDI's (Spatial Development Initiatives).

The following investments in provinces were made:

Province	No. of District Councils	Special Projects	SDI Projects	Total Budget
KwaZulu Natal	3 district councils	3 special projects	1 SDI	R 82.9 m
Eastern Cape	1 district council	4 special projects	4 SDI	R126.1 m
Mpumalanga	3 district councils			R 61.9 m
Free State	1 district council	1 special project		R 13.0 m
North West	1 district council			R 13.0 m
Northern Province		3 special projects		R 9.1 m
Northern Cape		1 special project		R 10.0 m

Gauteng	1 special project	R 4.4 m
Western Cape	1 special project	R 1.4 m

Funds were committed to projects by the end of the financial year (31/3/2000) and implementation started in April 2000. All funds were completely expended by 31 March 2001

c. 2000/01 Year of Implementation

Treasury allocated funding totalling R249 m for the 2000/01 Year of implementation which was increased by R100 m from the Department's own budget.

Funding for the 2000/01 year was again allocated according to the targeting formula to all district councils which had received funding in either the 1998/99 year or the 1999/00 year. Building on the successes achieved in the 1999/00 year funding was again allocated to special projects.

This allocation resulted in the following investment in provinces:

Province	No. of District Councils	Special Projects	Total Budget
KwaZulu Natal	7 district councils	4 special projects	R 88.8 m
Eastern Cape	6 district councils	5 special projects	R124.8 m
Mpumalanga	3 district councils	1 special project	R 16.0 m
Free State	1 district council		R 8.2 m
North West	1 district council		R 8.8 m
Northern Province	2 district councils	4 special projects	R 89.9 m
Gauteng		1 special project	R 0.2 m
Western Cape		1 special project	R 0.4 m

Funds were committed to projects early in the financial year and implementation started in April 2000. All funds were completely expended by 31 March 2001.

d. 2001/02 Year of Implementation (current)

Funding for this year was confirmed by Treasury prior to the start of the 2001/02 year and allocations to district municipalities were made immediately by the department enabling district municipalities to start planning projects prior to the start of the financial year. A top up of R100m by the Department from its own budget has again increased the total budget allocation from the Poverty Relief Fund from R274m to R374m.

This allocation has been again allocated according to the targeting formula to all district councils which had received funding in previous years and funding was again allocated to special projects as in previous years.

This allocation resulted in the following investment in provinces:

Province	No. of District Municipalities	Special Projects	Total Budget
KwaZulu Natal	10 district municipalities		R 99.8m
Eastern Cape	6 district municipalities		R111.8m
Mpumalanga	3 district municipalities		R 31.1m
Free State	1 district municipality		R 9.3m
North West	1 district municipality		R 11.8m
Northern Province	6 district municipalities		R 79.2m
Gauteng		1 special project	R 0.9m
Western Cape		1 special project	R 3.2m
Northern Cape		1 special project	R 1.5m

Conclusion

In dealing with Poverty Relief the question of self-sufficiency and sustainability of projects is a very important one. Projects that are seen as white elephants have to be revisited to make sure that they are viable. A concrete example is what happened at Hlabisa where a former white elephant is now a thriving business.

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