

**Minister of Public Works
Mr J Radebe
18 July 1997**

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At the Launch of the Matsulu Bus Route

Greetings and acknowledgement of the Premier,
Provincial Public Works MEC Mthembu,
Members of the media,
Workers and ladies and gentlemen.

Congratulate MEC Mthembu on his appointment as MEC for Public Works and the fact that so soon after his appointment he is championing in the public domain the flagship programme and ethos of Public Works.

The launch of the Matsulu Bus Route is the fulfilment of and delivery in our RDP mandate as the Public Works Department to co-ordinate the implementation of the National Public Works Pilot Projects of which 19 have been identified by provinces.

Through this project we have demonstrated our will to address the problem of uneven development and the challenges of rural communities who have historically been denied access to basic necessities and opportunities.

This project is not only about the upgrading, surfacing and associated drainage of 5.1 kms of an existing gravel bus route, on the contrary it symbolises our commitment to fostering a spirit of good governance in which people with their own hands carve the road forward to a better future.

It also symbolises the spirit of co-operation between diverse communities for the greater benefit of all which has become so characteristic of nation building in South Africa.

The NPWP was established as an initiative to assist the unemployed through creating an enabling framework which regulates the terms under which public contracts are granted including the question of wage rates.

NPWP does not actually fund any employment programmes but is a mechanism through which the number of people through public sector contracts can be increased.

The NPWP is one of many initiatives to strengthen the process of transformation by creating jobs, providing infrastructure, developing human resources and empowering communities.

The NPWP aims to reduce unemployment by creating productive jobs and opportunities for local contractors using labour intensive approaches.

The value of the project is R8,96 m and is funded from the department of Labour.

- The Matsulu Bus Route project has enhanced the quality of life of the beneficiary communities through:
- giving scope for the improvement of the transport system.
- giving access for marketing local products and services.
- ensuring improved safety and security due to improved road quality and better access to essential services.
- it has also enhanced the access to opportunities for local youth.

As an NPWP Project, The Matsula Bus Route Project has impacted upon the key objective to educate and train by providing accredited skills training, basic skills training, small contractor development programme, Adult Basic Education Training (ABET) in literacy, numeracy and life skills and building capacity in local communities.

In terms of job creation the project provided opportunities for employment for a total of 366 people between the ages of 22 and 61 people of which 63 were youth who were never employed, 56 were women who were sole breadwinners and 1 disabled person.

The project also impacted on the local construction industry by employing 24 sub-contractors in the transport

of materials (14), relocation of services (1), Culvert structures (1), Kerbing and drainage (5), Construction of bus bays, block paving and stone pitching (3).

Additional benefits include: stimulus to business inside the town, a decreased level of crime, improved storm water control, improved dust control, acquisition of entrepreneurial skills enabling people to start a business of their own.

One thousand seven hundred household members benefited directly from the project.

Finally, this project symbolises the commitment of government to improve the quality of life of all our people, particularly rural communities as well as demonstrating a firm resolve to deliver to those who have put us in power.

MATSULU BUS ROUTE

BACKGROUND

The Department of Public Works was mandated to co-ordinate the implementation of the National Public Works Pilot Projects. 19 projects were identified by the provinces.

A budget of R45m came from the Department of Labour funds and an additional amount of R100m from RDP funds was allocated to this programme.

The Department of Labour funds were only for construction and provinces were to provide funding for consultants. Out of Department of Labour funding R8,96m was allocated towards construction of the Matsulu Bus Route in Mpumalanga Province.

The duration of the project was 9 months, commencing on 18 July 1996 and was completed on 6 May 1997.

SCOPE OF PROJECT

The project involved the upgrading, surfacing and associated drainage of 5,1 kms of an existing gravel bus route.

The streets were generally in a very poor condition prior to the upgrading and reconstruction, which made access to certain areas difficult.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

One of the key objectives of NPWP is to educate and train people. A provision was made in the Matsulu Bus Route Project for:

- Accredited skills training
- Basic skills training
- Small contractor development programme
- Generic training i.e. literacy, numeracy and life skills
- Community capacity building

TRAINING COMPONENT MATSULU

Category of training	Type/Detail	Total no of people	Total cost R	Cost/pp R	Trainer	Vocational/	Introduction to
all participants on the project	95	2375.00	25.00	SNA skills	Basic technical skills	1479	65000.00
Labor Construction						43.95	

***Accredited skills training	123	69282.89	572.59	Massima	Small Management course	11	78790.31	7,162.76
Labor Construction contractor management	Team Leaders course	14	13362.00	1,027.85	Massima			
Community capacity building	CLO course	6	11950.00	1,991.67	Milcorp Life Skills	ABET	60	2690.60
							44.84	

Total

Total vocational skills 1695 136657.89 80.62 Community capacity building 6 11950.00 1,991.67 Small contractor management 24 92152.31 3,839.68

1. Accredited technical skills - 12 courses

i) Apply basic concrete skills ii) Install gabions and reno mattresses iii) Install subsoil drains iv) Lay and join precast concrete pipes v) Concrete kerbing vi) Concrete drains vii) Grouted stone in/outlets viii) Excavate/backfill and compact ix) Lay small areas of concrete block paving x) Reinstate base course/due to potholes xi) Install mountable and barrier kerb units xii) Lay small areas of stone pitching

2. Team leaders course

3. Accredited small contractor management programme

4. Community liaison officer course

NPWP OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED IMPLEMENTATIONS

The Province was the executing agent and construction, with specified labour intensive activities, was carried out mainly by the contractor with some of the work sub-contracted to local contractors. Labour intensive activities were also carried out under the main contractor.

NUMBER OF JOBS

The number of person days of employment created has been approximately 20000 which can be sub-divided as follows:

Men Women Main Contractor 10400 3800 Sub-Contractor/s 5600 200

Range of beneficiary communities

The NPWP projects generally targeted needy communities. Jobs are targeted at the long term unemployment and single headed households. Special attention is given to the employment of women, youth and disabled people.

On this project the following were employed: - total 366

Men Women Youth who have never been employed before 63 - Single headed households - 56 Disabled 1 -

Long term unemployed 246

NUMBER OF SUB-CONTRACTORS EMPLOYED

24 sub-contractors were employed on the project who performed the following activities:

Truck owners transporting materials on site - 14 Relocating of services - 1 Culvert structures - 1 Kerbing and/or side drains and/or subsoil drainage and/or gabions - 5 Construction of bus bays, block paving and stone pitching - 3

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

Employment

Most of the people who were employed on this project were illiterate and some had never been employed before or had been without employment for a long time, before finally being employed on this project.

Their ages range from 22 to 61. Since their employment included a training component this seemed an important factor in letting them earn money and also acquire skills at the same time. This in general improved the lifestyle of the local community. Even though the money that they were earning was little and was given to

them in cash they could manage to buy themselves and their families daily needs from the local shops. Which means that the money circulated within the local business community.

Ownership

The labour used in this project was local. It means that the majority of people from the community understood that there was a need for improving the road and because some were involved in the daily construction and also the fact that the community was informed through community meetings about the proceedings and process of the road construction. A sense of ownership was installed into the community. As a result the newly constructed road would be accepted and respected by the community.

Understanding between ideologies

Initially one Community Liaison Officer was to be appointed for the project, but because of the different ideologies amongst the community two CLOs were elected which belonged to the two most strong political parties and this was acceptable to the whole community. This is evidence of how tolerance has lead to improved relations within this community. The project has now ended and no problem was ever experienced due to political intolerance.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF PROJECT

The construction of Matsulu Bus Route using labour intensive construction methods of delivery has a direct impact on community.

The greatest benefit to the community is the improved accessibility created by the bus route in terms of the following:

- Bus transport to commuters
- Taxi transport to commuters
- Deliveries of building materials
- Deliveries of local business access to schools and businesses
- Stimulus to new business inside the town
- Decrease level of crime due to easy accessibility of the area by police.

Other benefits

- Improved stormwater control
- Improved dust control

An estimated total of 1,700 (24%) household members benefited directly from the project.

Through the training programme, participants are able to start their own businesses. That reduces the level of dependency. Participants who receive skills training are able to get employment within or outside their community.

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