



public works

Department:  
Public Works  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

# **Kamoso Awards**

***Rewarding EPWP Excellence***

*Emperor's Palace, Kempton Park  
17 October 2013*

**Keynote Address:**

**Honourable TW Nxesi, Minister of Public Works**

## PROTOCOL [CHECK]

- Programme Director
- Deputy Minister, Honourable Jeremy Cronin
- MECs
- Representative(s) of the Portfolio Committee
- Executive mayors
- Councillors
- Director-General, Mr Mziwonke Dlabantu
- Heads of Departments
- Senior staff in all spheres of government
- Municipal managers
- Representatives of the non-state sector and NPOs
- Representatives of DPW entities
- Members of the media
- Ladies and gentlemen
- And most important of all, our Award winners

Good evening and welcome. Thank you for making the time to be with us tonight at this important event.

Let us remember the reason we are gathered here tonight – to celebrate excellence and to acknowledge the successes and collective and individual efforts of EPWP implementers.

The Kamoso Awards were instituted in 2007 to encourage, motivate, recognise and reward the best performing government departments, municipalities, provinces and public bodies for their contribution in creating work opportunities for unemployed South Africans.

Let me also acknowledge the vital role played by our partners in the implementation of the EPWP, and most importantly the Independent Development Trust (IDT), as our implementing agent.

*On a lighter note, as Minister of Public Works, I spend so much of my time talking about fraud and corruption,*

*collusion etc... that it is a welcome relief to come to the Kamoso Awards where the message is so positive. The serious point is to remind ourselves that there remain large parts of the Public Works family that are functional – and in the case of EPWP, are striving for excellence.*

Key objectives of the Awards include:

- To mobilise government stakeholders and partners to increase their efforts around EPWP implementation.
- To communicate and showcase progress, impact, and successes of EPWP as a key government programme
- To create a platform to enhance visibility of the EPWP and reinforce its objectives to a broader audience, and

- To promote the creation of labour intensive work opportunities.

Suffice to say that the large number – and rich variety – of Awards – is indicative of how far EPWP has come.

### ***Combatting the Triple Challenge***

In his 2012 State of the Nation Address, President Zuma identified poverty, unemployment and inequality as the triple challenges facing South Africa today. That is why EPWP is a lead flagship programme of the Department of Public Works and of government - aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment through the provision of work opportunities.

Our task as DPW is to lead a concerted effort from all spheres of government, business, public bodies and all other role players to implement EPWP programmes and to optimise the allocated resources.

With this in mind, last year, I asked the following question:

*How do we radically expand the scope and content of the Expanded Public Works Programme?*

I said:

- *We have to be very creative here. I am not talking about creating jobs as an end in itself – where only the affected individuals benefit. We are talking here about creating employment opportunities as part of a broader strategy to develop communities as a whole.*
- *We also need to scrutinise infrastructure roll out plans to ensure that EPWP thinking - on labour intensive methodologies and job creation – is enshrined in contracts with service providers.*

I am therefore very pleased to announce that:

- The EPWP has increased its targets for new work opportunities during the current year from 1.23 million to 1.65 million: 660,000 of these opportunities will go to unemployed youth.
- From the side of our entity, CIDB (Construction Industry Development Board) and the PICC 'best practice clauses' have been developed for construction contracts which build in the principle of labour intensive work.

We need to remind ourselves that EPWP is much more than just the work opportunity statistics reported. It is always a humbling experience to listen to the beneficiaries of this Programme sharing their testimonies about the EPWP. We must never forget that they are the reason we do what we do as EPWP and DPW.

Indeed the testimonies of the EPWP beneficiaries tell the story:

- Re-awakening the dignity that comes with work and the ability to contribute to household income.
- Acquiring skills and re-entering the job market, in some cases.
- Providing an opportunity to access education,
- And providing hope for a better future.

### ***EPWP Phase 3***

The planning for Phase 3 of the EPWP Programme – from 2014-2019 – has been finalised, based on the following approach:

- To up-scale numbers – by better use of existing budgets; and focusing on areas which give the largest number of work opportunities.



- But more importantly, rather than just counting numbers, the emphasis will be on the quality of the EPWP outcomes in terms of:
  - Improved service for poor communities – such as home-based care, ECD, security, cleaning of cemeteries etc
  - Provision – and maintenance - of additional infrastructure such as roads, as well as
  - More innovative projects which concentrate on greening and sustaining the environment.
  
- Also, as National DPW we are meeting with the Department of Cooperative Governance to plan how EPWP can assist municipalities to better utilise their infrastructure grants for job creation.

Yesterday – with the Deputy Minister – we presented the plan for EPWP Phase 3 to the Economic Cluster Cabinet Committee.

I am pleased to report that we had a very positive response and discussion. Crucially we have won support for labour intensive methodologies across the board – with ministers committed to developing appropriate projects.

There is generally a call for greater coordination and integration of government programmes. So from the side of EPWP – Mr Henderson – we need to do a little more work in terms of developing synergies with other programmes and departments, particularly:

- Department of Higher Education and Training
- Department of Trade and industry
- And in relation to the focus on greening.

We will then take the augmented plan for Phase 3 to the full Cabinet for approval.

I need to address some remarks to the representative(s) of the Portfolio Committee regarding issues raised yesterday in Parliament in response to the presentation of the Annual Report. Questions raised included:

- *Inadequate monitoring and evaluation* – let me assure you that the Plan for Phase 3 incorporates a further upgrade of the M&E system – which is more user-friendly for municipalities, whilst meeting DORA (Division of Revenue Act) requirements.
- *Insufficient training of EPWP beneficiaries* – Again, in Phase 3 there is renewed emphasis on the qualitative outcomes of programmes – which includes focused attention on training. It should be noted, however, that the extent of training has to be linked to funds committed by implementing bodies and National Treasury.

- *Absence of proper EPWP attire for beneficiaries in some projects* – Mr Henderson I know has noted this, and will address it as a matter of urgency.
- *Lack of norms and standards with regards to stipends etc.* Again, the review of Phase 2 alerted us to this challenge, and Phase 3 will seek to enforce uniform labour standards. This also includes transparent and uniform selection criteria for the appointment of beneficiaries.
- *Lack of representivity of people living with disabilities on EPWP programmes* – This is a major concern across government. I experienced the same problem in the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. The EPWP has done some work through a drive in the Non-State Sector with organizations for People with Disabilities in all provinces.

I am requesting the DDG to provide me with a detailed strategy to address this challenge. I think we can take hope from the Eastern Cape EPWP – which has exceeded targets in respect to appointments of people living with disabilities.

Let me acknowledge the important work done by the Portfolio Committee – whereby the elected representatives of the people hold ministers and departments to account. This is at the very heart of our democratic system.

### ***Rebuilding DPW***

I need to report to you on progress in relation to rebuilding the Department of Public Works.

As you know, my approach and strategy in turning around DPW has been based on two pillars:

- Zero tolerance of fraud and corruption; and

- Improving the way in which DPW conducts business and provides services.
- whilst simultaneously stabilising the Department.

### ***Combatting fraud and corruption***

This has involved:

- Pursuing corrupt individuals using the investigative capacity of the SIU; implementing disciplinary procedures; and through the courts seeking to recover monies wrongly paid.
- Acting on information provided by the Public Service Commission regarding officials who have not declared business interests and conflicts of interest.
- Reviewing and strengthening the management of the supply chain/procurement.
- Strengthening internal investigative capacity.

***Priority programmes to improve business:***

*(i) Improved management of state assets*

- Develop a comprehensive reliable Register of Immoveable Assets – for the first time an accurate list of state assets, including the condition and value.
- Operationalize a fully-fledged Property Management Trading Entity – using best practice to establish an asset investment management framework and employing skilled professionals.
- Reviewing all leases and establishing a professional lease management framework.

This is a real game changer:

- It will remove the basis of the disclaimers and most audit qualifications the DPW has had in recent years.

- A well-managed portfolio of state assets can be leveraged for income creation, economic growth and jobs.

*(ii) Management of state construction projects*

- Employing more built environment professionals (engineers, quantity surveyors etc) and
- Improved systems of project planning and management

*(iii) Stabilising the DPW*

- Crucially this means stabilising the leadership (14 DGs between 2001 and 2013; and frequent change of ministers). We appointed a permanent DG and CFO at the beginning of 2013.



- A Turnaround team appointed under the DG's office to oversee the change management process.
- Clean Audit project which has already improved the audit outcomes for the Department:
  - Already for 2012/13, the DPW Main Account improved from a disclaimed audit opinion to a qualified audit opinion. The number of areas qualified was reduced from eight to three.
  - Although the PMTE audit result remains a disclaimed opinion, the number of qualifications has decreased from thirteen in 2011/12 to four in 2012/13 - largely in the lease environment.
- Our aim is to achieve an Unqualified Audit Opinion in this financial year.

***The Big Picture is this:***

- EPWP will be delivering more than 4.5 million work opportunities in Phase 2 - more in Phase 3.
- This government has delivered. I firmly believe that South Africa is a much better place today than it was in 1994.

This is not a political occasion – so I am not supposed to talk politics. That’s difficult for me – as a full-time politician. So I’ll rather speak about ‘delivery’.

Since 1994 government has delivered:

- We have built a non-racial constitutional democracy, built on a culture of human rights
- There are 6 million more permanent jobs now than there were in 1994 (according to the Institute for Race Relations).
- In 1994 only 50% of people had access to toilets. Today that figure is 84%.

- We have subsidised and built 3.3 million houses.
- In 1994 less than 5 million households had access to clean water. Today 13 million households have access – of which 7 million receive 6,000 litres free each month.
- We have built a universal free and compulsory education system - and extended schooling to include Grade R.
- We have doubled the number of university students and graduates, and
- We now feed 9 million school children daily.

Going forward, the government has announced:

- its intention to fast-track land reform, and

- has announced a Four Trillion Rand infrastructure roll-out to drive economic growth and job creation.

I hope that wasn't political. By the way, don't take my word for it: check the website of the independent South African Institute for Race Relations which clearly indicates poverty reduction since 1994.

One international measure of poverty is the number of people living on under 2 Dollars a day (R20 per day). In 1994 the figure was 20% of the population. Today it is around 3%. [*So we still have a way to go.*]

As we prepare for elections in 2014, I want to make the following points:

First, it is your right and duty to criticise government officials and representatives when we do not deliver. I would urge you to do this through the Ward committees.

I would be the first to admit that mistakes have been made. A large part of my job as Minister of Public Works is exactly to address these mistakes and to root out the tenderpreneurs and corrupt elements. The same process is happening in other departments.

Thirdly, let us never forget that it was the Alliance – led by the ANC – which after decades of struggle and sacrifice – brought down the cruel Apartheid regime.

Let me conclude on that note, before I am accused of being too political.

Allow me to acknowledge the hard work of the organisers of this event, as well as thank the participants who responded to the call by the DPW to enter for the EPWP Kamoso Awards nominations.

As we work together with different stakeholders - including provinces, public entities, municipalities, Non Profit Organisations and implementing agents - I urge the officials of EPWP to provide leadership and give our partners the maximum support. We cannot work in silos.

I hope that these awards will encourage and motivate us all to redouble our efforts in taking the EPWP to new heights of achievement in the years ahead.

I thank you.