



EPWP Bi-Weekly Bulletin

**MINISTER AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMENDS EMPLOYMENT OF EPWP NYS LEARNERS BY CONTRACTORS AT DISA COURT BUILDING IN CAPE TOWN**

Article by Kgomotso Mathuloe, pictures by Maanea Maselesele



The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Mr Sihle Zikalala, MP, together with the Deputy Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Ms Bernice Swarts MP, visited the Disa Court building which is undergoing repairs and renovations to provide conducive working environment to its client department.

increase their employability when they exit the Programme. The contractor has absorbed 14 NYS Participants who are currently working on site until the project is complete.

Addressing the NYS Participants who attended the event, Minister Zikalala congratulated the learners and encouraged them to further their studies and use the skills they acquired to become entrepreneurs.

The building will accommodate 230 South African Police Service Crime Intelligence Unit, and the aim of the ministerial visit was to assess the progress made regarding these renovations and establish the targeted period of completion. The project is funded by the Department of Public and Infrastructure (DPWI) Cape Town Regional office and the total cost of the project is R72 million and it is 75% toward completion and expected date for completion in October 2023.

The Deputy Minister thanked the contractor for absorbing the 14 learners and reiterated that learners should effectively utilise their skills to form SMMEs and be part of the active economy.



The project has created 63 Expanded Public Works Programme - National Youth service work opportunities for the unemployed youth who took part in the renovations and repairs of Disa court building. Furthermore, the participants were trained in various Artisan skills such as carpentry, painting and plastering. These critical skills will

Speaking on behalf of the EPWP National Youth Service (NYS) Participants, Mr Leelan Williams thanked the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure for bringing this project to their community. He said that the project has provided hope to the communities which is affected by crime and gangsterism. Williams said participating in this project has been life charging experience. ■

**EPWP HAS GIVEN DIGNITY TO PEOPLE LIKE US WHO ARE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES – SAYS COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN KOSTER, IN THE NORTH WEST**

Article by Michael Mokoena, pictures by Sobatini Mahlasela



“The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) has given dignity to people like me who are living with disability in our community of Koster in the North West. Being given an opportunity to wake up every day and contribute to my community through the EPWP work we do here at Itireleng Sewing Project Centre has given hope to many of us disabled people in the area. As a result of the useful work we do in the project, we are no longer seen as objects of pity who survive through handouts...we are viewed as women and men who are doing useful work in the community...indeed the EPWP has restored our dignity”.

project to the needy in the area,” he stated. Moleofi pointed out that as part of its sustainability project, Itireleng Sewing Project has ventured into food gardening. “The food we produce from our garden is sold to the community to generate revenue for the project. We also donate some of the food we produce to the needy in our community to the EPWP participants who are working with us,” he added.

The above statement was made by Ms. Mapule Molefe who is one of 26 people with disability who are working at the Itireleng Sewing Project in Koster in the North West. The sewing project is one of the 23 projects that are currently being supported by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) through its Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Enterprise Development Unit in the North West.

The project has also appointed three EPWP participants, two of whom are young women to assist with the project’s administration work. Moleofi explained that Itireleng Sewing Project has also ventured into the EPWP Non-State Sector where it has appointed EPWP participants to do work in surrounding places like Groot Marico, Reagile, and Kortfontein. “We have also placed participants in the Department of Health’s Koster Hospital where they are doing environmental practice.

Another participant, Mr. Gabriel Kgatlhane explained that participating in the EPWP has also given them an opportunity to provide for their loved ones while doing community-beneficial work. “Many of us here are mothers and fathers...we are breadwinners in our families. As a result of participating in the EPWP, we are able to provide for our families,” he said. This project is located at Itireleng Disability Centre NPO in Reagile Koster in the North West.

These participants are carrying out various activities such as being potters, working in the laundry, working as grounds men while others work in the maternity wards,” Moleofi explained. He added that participants who are placed in the Department of Health were gaining valuable skills they can use to enter the formal job market. DPWI’s manager responsible for EPWP Enterprise Development in the province, Ms. Rhoda Moroe stated that the Department was committed to supporting projects such as Itireleng Sewing to ensure that they remained sustainable. “We have already provided enterprise development support to this project and other projects in the area through the International Labour Organisation’s Improve Your Business training. The focus of ILO training was on Record Keeping, Marketing, and Costing.”

According to the manager of the project, Mr. Tshedise Moleofi, the project was formed in 1997 with the objective of providing opportunities for people with disabilities in the area. He explained that work done by EPWP participants in the project included sewing garments, shoe repairing, and tending to the food garden. “Our objective is to provide people with disabilities with skills in garment sewing, shoe making and repair, and food gardening. Our wish is to see the participants gain knowledge and skills and eventually exit the project into formal work or small businesses,” Moleofi explained.

Moroe added that training on technical training such as garment making and crop production are planned for the participants to equip them with skills to ensure that some participants can either become professional garment producers, commercial farmers, and business owners in the future or get employment from alternative employers. The Programme Manager for EPWP in North West, Ms Xoliswa Letsapa, pointed out that the Department remained resolute in creating EPWP work opportunities for people with disabilities.

He highlighted that Itireleng Sewing Project has also donated domestic sewing machinery to some of the people working at the centre to ensure that they (people working at the centre) set up their businesses in their homes.

Moleofi indicated that currently, the project was producing garments for various entities such as government organisations and local schools. “We also donate some of the clothes we make from the

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**EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME**