



EPWP Bi-Weekly Bulletin

MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE OUTLINES THE PLANS TO MAXIMISE THE IMPACT OF THE EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

Article and pictures by: Lesego Moretlwe

The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Honourable Sihle Zikalala, recently delivered the keynote address during the two-day Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Phase 5 Indaba which was aimed at “reconceptualization” and “redesigning” of the EPWP of the Future. The Indaba was held in Hatfield, Pretoria-Gauteng on 10-11 October 2023.

The EPWP Phase 5 Indaba was also aimed at unpacked new innovative ideas which will accelerate the creation of work opportunities that have a long lasting impact on the unemployment of South African youth. This crucial engagement was also convened to take stock of the current phase which is coming to an end in March next year.

As at 06 October 2023, the EPWP has created 610 882 work opportunities which is 58.8% towards reaching its 2023/2024 financial year targets. Overall, for the EPWP Phase 4 (2019/20-2023/24), the Programme has cumulatively created over 4.5 million work opportunities against the target of 5 million work opportunities for the period ending March 2024.

“EPWP Phase 5 should be more than just combatting unemployment. It is about rewriting the story of our youth from one of despair to one of hope, from stagnation to growth and from dependency to self-reliance,” said Minister Zikalala.

In addition to the work opportunities created by the EPWP, Minister Zikalala emphasised the need for the provision of meaningful and impactful projects which should be valuable to the development of

participants. The Minister has therefore outlined the following key-points for critical consideration towards maximising the impact of the EPWP in various South African communities in the next five years (2024-2029) as follows:

- Improve coordination and effectiveness of structures implementing the Programme
- Improve the implementation framework from recruitment to the end. Implementation should be bolstered through effective monitoring and accountability,
- Define impactful projects. While providing work opportunities and skills, there is a need to contribute towards improving the quality and delivery of services to the people
- Improve training to provide meaningful skills while preserving the cost benefit.
- Ensure proper exit strategies through enterprise development and linking other participants with permanent employment for the participants to be able to become entrepreneurs and also enter the job market. Well positioned to coordinate and participate in the implementation of the EPWP Phase 5.

The EPWP Indaba brought together a host of stakeholders from all spheres of government, civil society, and the private sector to work together in strengthening their partnership in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the EPWP in the next phase. This was a hybrid and an interactive session which sought to come up with defined proposals to be endorsed by the Cabinet and be implemented for EPWP Phase 5 which is expected to be rolled out from 2024 to 2029.



EPWP PARTICIPANT IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE GAIN PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT POST THE ARTISAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Article and Pictures by: Lesego Moretlwe

One of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants, Mr Leoma Folotsi was able to get a formal employment after completing his 3-year Artisan Development Programme. This was announced on 29 September 2023 at a graduation ceremony of 6 EPWP participants who graduated as plumbing artisans under the banner of EPWP -AgriSETA Artisan Development Programme in Kroonstad, Free State. All participants were recruited in Moqhaka Local Municipality in Kroonstad. Folotsi is employed as an artisan at CC Chickens which provided practical training while theoretical training was provided by Flavius Mareka Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College.

During the event, the 33-year-old Folotsi's excitement was heightened when he was recognised as the best learner in his class for the duration of the training and awarded a gift as a token of recognition for showing a high level of commitment to his studies and practical work. The elated Folotsi described his experience in the Artisan Development Programme as a lifetime opportunity that he will always cherish as it has opened the doors for the future. He expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the Programme.

He further stated that the training was intensive and needed hard-work as well as a positive mindset to succeed. Regarding being chosen as the best learner, Folotsi said he was very happy about this recognition as it is proof for his commitment and hard work. When asked how he sees life going forward, Folotsi said “I am looking forward to working very hard within the Artisan field, gaining more experience, and at the same time providing artisan services within communities where they are needed,” he said.

Speaking during the graduation, Ms. Rose Dichakane: EPWP training Manager in Free State said she was thankful for the contribution of all

the stakeholders for the success of the Artisan Development Programme. Dichakane congratulated all the artisans for their success despite the challenges they faced while they were participating in the training. She indicated that the learners have grown so well within the Programme to a level of maturity where they are now fully-fledged artisans and ready for the world of work. “I am happy with what I am seeing, this is not the end...it is the beginning of something new,” Dichakane concluded.

The Director for Finance at CC Chickens, Mr. Danie Van Zyl, expressed his gratitude for having worked with all the stakeholders that made the training possible. He also acknowledged all the stakeholders for their role in the implementation of the Artisan Development Programme and congratulated the participants for their resilience until the end of the training programme.

The lecturer at Flavius Mareka TVET College, Mr. Thembinkosi Lekitlane, indicated that it was an honour for him to have been part of the training since 2021 when the training commenced. “You have ran a marathon with many artisans and you emerged as the winners, welcome to the world of artisans! This is not the end, continue practicing and remember that you are going to compete with the best in the industry”, Lekitlane, said.

Among attendees were Mr. Stephan Du Preez, who was coordinator of the project at CC Chickens and Mr Mashilo Moroko of AgriSETA. They have also played a critical role in the success of this training programme. The success of this training initiative is attributed to the multiple partnerships of DPWI-EPWP, AgriSeta, CC Chickens, and Flavius Mareka TVET College.

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EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME